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LIFE OF  
SRIS CHANDRA BASU

BY  
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R. CHATTERJEE

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SRI CHANDRA BASU

# LIFE OF SRIS CHANDRA BASU

## CHAPTER I

### *BEGINNINGS OF ENGLISH EDUCATION IN THE PUNJAB*

It is necessary to describe the condition of education in the Punjab in the early sixties and seventies of the last century, before we essay to portray the life and character of that eminent scholar, Sris Chandra Basu, because not only Sris Chandra, but also his father, Babu Syama Charan Basu, were intimately connected with the educational activities of the Punjab for many years.

In the early fifties and sixties of the last century, education had not made much progress in India, and much less in the Punjab, which was a very backward province, specially in educational matters, at that time. It was necessary to take special measures to create a taste for high education in the people of the Punjab. Lord Lawrence was not in sympathy with the requirements of the inhabitants of that province.

Wood's Educational Despatch of 1854 was a landmark in the history of Indian Education. It brought into being the Educational Departments in the different provinces of India. The Punjab also got its own Department of Education. But the man who was appointed to guide the destinies of the Education Department was not an educational expert. Mr. William Delafield Arnold,



the first Director of Public Instruction of the Punjab, possessed no other qualification for this high post than that of being the son of his father. Dr. Thomas Arnold of Rugby. Mr. Arnold was at first a military officer, but on the creation of the Punjab Education Department was appointed its head on a salary of Rs. 1,200 per month.

Not only Mr. Arnold, but also his successors, namely, Lieutenant Paske and Captain Fuller, unfortunately were not educational experts, though occupying the highest post in the Education Department. It was rather fortunate for the province, that the gentleman who was selected as their Assistant not only knew the requirements of that province, but possessed great sympathy for its inhabitants. The Assistant in question was no other than Babu Syama Charan Basu, the father of Sris Chandra Basu, who devoted his life to the furtherance of the cause of education in the land of the five rivers.

Even after Wood's Educational Despatch of 1854, no systematic attempt was made in the Punjab for the spread of higher education. The province had to wait about a decade before a move was made for the establishment of the Government College at Lahore. In his letter No. 14, dated 8th April, 1861, the Secretary of State for India wrote to the Government of India :

"The formation of a school of a superior order at Lahore, which will serve as the nucleus of the College, which, under the original scheme sanctioned in 1856, will hereafter be constituted for the Punjab, has my approval." (*A Collection of Despatches, etc., from 1854-1868*, p. 60).

This need for "the formation of a school of a superior

order at Lahore," was felt because education in the Punjab schools till this period was free. It is evident from the following quotation from the letter of the Secretary of State for India, from which the above extract is given :

"It is stated by the Lieutenant-Governor that sanction has been separately given to the proposals of the Director regarding the demand of schooling fees from the pupils in the several classes of schools. There do not seem to me to be any circumstances which would justify the continued exemption of the Punjab from the rule prevailing in other parts of India, under which schooling fees are universally exacted." *Ibid.*, p. 181.

At last the Government College was established in Lahore in 1864, ten years after Wood's Educational Despatch had been written. Dr. Leitner was appointed its Principal. As his appointment was made in an irregular manner, it called forth the following letter (No. 10, Dated 24th March, 1864) from the Secretary of State for India to the Government of India (*Ibid.*, p. 190) :

"The following advertisement has recently appeared in several successive issues of the *Times* newspaper :

'Educational appointments in India.—A principal on £ 792, and a Professor on £ 600, per annum, are required for the Government College at Lahore in the Punjab. £ 200 will be allowed to each for passage money and outfit. For one post mathematical attainments are desired, at least equal to those of a medium Cambridge wrangler ; and for the other, excellence in classics, at least up to the standard of a good Oxford Second Class, and proficiency in English Language and Literature. Proficiency in other subjects, such as History, Law, Mental and Moral Science, or the Oriental languages, especially Arabic, Persian and Hindoostanee, will render a candidate, otherwise qualified, still more eligible for appointment. Early

applications with copies of testimonials, should be sent, either direct to Captain Fuller, R. A., Director of Public Instruction for the Punjab at Lahore: or to Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co., Cornhill, London, who will forward them by the next overland mail and supply any further information that may be needed.

"I have to request that the attention of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab may be called to the irregularity which has been committed by the Director of Public Instruction; and that he may be directed in future to conform to the prescribed course of submitting to the Secretary of State any occasion which may arise for the engagement of a gentleman in this country for the Educational Service in the Punjab, .."

Here we find the Secretary of State pointing out "the irregularity" committed by Captain Fuller, the Director of Public Instruction of the Punjab. But this "irregularity" was not rectified and it brought out Dr. Leitner to India as the Principal of the Government College, Lahore. It is doubtful whether he would have been selected for the job, if the selection for the appointment had been left to the Secretary of State for India, who, in the letter referred to above, observed that "The above advertisement is . . . . open to the further objection that a decision passed at Lahore on the applications of individuals supported by testimonials sent from England would afford a very insufficient security for the selection of the best candidate."

The establishment of the Lahore Government College was the first step towards the spread of higher education in the Punjab. But this first College of Lahore did not have a very promising beginning. It did not fare well in the first year of its existence. Mr. A. M. Monteath, in his "Note on the State of Education in India during

1865-66," writes regarding the Lahore Government College :

"It has been found difficult to get students, and still more difficult to keep them,..." (p. 25)

In a marginal note he remarks that—

"There was in 1865-66 an average attendance of only 8 students in the Lahore College." (p 26)

This was rather a disappointing state of affairs for the Government College, Lahore. It was thought necessary to attract students to the new College by offering scholarships. So it was proposed to grant scholarships to all the students who attended the College. The Director of Public Instruction, Punjab, therefore, wrote on 20th April, 1865, to the Secretary to the Government of the Punjab :

"By orders of the Supreme Government in the Home Department under date the 15th April, 1864, sanctioning establishments for the Lahore and Delhi Colleges, Rs. 200 per mensem in all, *i. e.*, Rs. 100 for each College, were passed on account of scholarships...I now beg that the Government of India may be solicited to sanction the proposed increase to college scholarships of Rs 200 per mensem for the year 1865-66, and that a similar increase may be allowed for each of the two years succeeding... Thus, when the colleges are in full working order, with four classes in each, the whole cost of scholarships, will be Rs. 800 per mensem, or Rs. 400 for each College."

The Secretary to the Government of the Punjab in forwarding this application of the D. P. I. to the Government of India wrote "that the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor supports this application."

Lord Lawrence was then the Viceroy and Governor-General of India. He was, unfortunately, not in favour of

this proposal. He objected to sanction this paltry sum of Rs. 400 a month to the Lahore Government College.

In his letter of 31st May, 1865, the Under-secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, wrote to the Secretary to the Government of the Punjab that—

“The proposed sum of Rs. 400 per mensem would apparently suffice to give to every one of the students in the two Colleges a monthly stipend of about Rs. 13, being one rupee more than the average value of the Bengal Junior Scholarships for exactly the same class of students (first and second years) and open to be competed for at the University Entrance Examination by the numerous candidates from all schools, Government and private, in the lower provinces of Bengal....

“Even admitting the possible propriety of extending a more than ordinarily liberal encouragement of this sort during the infancy of college education in the Punjab, the Governor-General in Council would suppose that scholarships for about one-third of the total number of students ought to be amply sufficient. This would give about 10 scholarships which, at an average of Rs 12 each (the average amount of the Bengal Junior Scholarships), would make a total charge of Rs. 120 per mensem for the students of both colleges, being less by Rs. 280 than the amount proposed and falling short by Rs. 80 of the amount (Rs. 200) already sanctioned.”

Thus, it seemed for the time being that the fate of the Lahore Government College had been sealed, because, in the event of the proposed scholarships not being granted, the condition of the Government College would continue to grow worse.

Moreover, it did not seem probable that a subordinate Government and the various departments under it would venture to argue out the case with the Supreme Govern-

ment, even if the Government of India happened to take a wrong view of the situation. It has rightly been observed by Mr. Ludlow that:

"No officials in the world would have greater temptations to sacrifice everything for the sake of a quiet life, than the Indian ones. The climate is enervating: they have no permanent connection with the country, no abiding incentive to activity... Why, unless from higher motives than any which constitute the ordinary springs of Government, should he trouble himself to do the right and fight the wrong?" (Ludlow's *British India*, Vol. II, p. 40-41.)

Thus the fate of the Government College, Lahore, was hanging in the balance. The Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab and the D. P. I. would have allowed the matter to rest there, because they had "no permanent connection with the country," and "no abiding incentive to activity."

Fortunately for the Punjab, the province then had Babu Syama Charan Basu as the Head Clerk of the Education Department. He realized the calamity that would befall the land of his adoption, if the question of scholarships were allowed to drop. He, therefore, induced the D. P. I., his chief, to ask the Government of India to reconsider the decision. It was Babu Syama Charan who drafted the reply to the Government of India's letter, which was forwarded on the 24th July 1865 to the Punjab Government for transmission to the Government of India. In this reply, signed by the Director of Public Instruction, Punjab, it was said:

"My proposal undoubtedly was, and is that for the present, every student of colleges in the Punjab should receive an allowance from Government just sufficient to maintain him there,

unless he or his parents have the means themselves of providing for his maintenance. For this is the only way in which we can hope at first to keep the colleges...supplied with a sufficiency of students and prevent the time of the Principals and Professors being wasted in lecturing to miserably small classes."

The Government of India had to recognise the force of this argument, because they wrote to the Punjab Government that "The argument is undoubtedly a strong one."

The Director went on to say :

"I readily admit that scholarships, properly so called, should be awarded to the meritorious among a host of competitors, as is the case in every country that can boast of even moderate intellectual development. But in the Punjab, colleges have only just been opened, and the advantages of University Education are not yet properly appreciated, because they have not yet in any case been realized here, as elsewhere, by the advancement of those so liberally educated to posts of the highest dignity and emolument. Moreover, the inhabitants of the Punjab, as compared with the other parts of the Bengal Presidency, are decidedly poor, especially the upper classes, from which our college students ought chiefly to be drawn, [as most likely to possess the requisite leisure and means for pursuing so long and advanced a course of study as is required by the University for its Degrees. In the Punjab, then, I submit that scholarships must be, for sometime to come at any rate, regarded rather in the light of stipends or subsistence allowances to poor but willing and laborious students than as rewards to the meritorious out of a host of competitors.

"I would, therefore, most earnestly solicit His Excellency the Viceroy in Council to re-consider the supposition that 'scholarships for about one-third of the whole number of students ought to be amply sufficient.' If two-thirds of the present scholarships were, under the foregoing rule, withdrawn,

two-thirds of the students would infallibly disappear. ....Or, to be plain, after sanctioning so large an expenditure to start the Punjab colleges, the Supreme Government, for the sake of one or two hundred rupees a month more, would utterly prevent the due development of those institutions: and the previous and current heavy expenditure, instead of being turned to the best account and made to yield the largest return of well educated college men, would, on the contrary, be lamentably wasted on the education of a very small number.....”

The Bengal system of awards of scholarships was sought to be introduced by the Government of India in the Punjab. In the course of the letter, drafted by his assistant, the Director put forth the following argument against the introduction of the Bengal system in the Punjab:—

“I would invite the consideration of the Hon'ble the Lieutenant-Governor and of His Excellency the Viceroy in Council to a closer comparison of the status of the Punjab and of Bengal proper in regard to the matter of college scholarships. I select Bengal, because constant reference is made throughout the Supreme Government's letter to the state of affairs there, and it is evidently held up to us as a model, to which we should strive to attain.

“Now I find that, in the province of lower Bengal, according to its Educational Report for 1863-64, no less than a sum of Rs. 61,752 is annual y spent in college scholarships,...

“If then, the comparatively richer province of Bengal, where English education of a higher standard has been going on for years, say in the ratio of about a quarter of a century to every year that it has been at work in the Punjab, is found to require this pecuniary stimulus *a fortiori* must a proportional stimulus of this kind be needed in the latter province, which suffers under the disadvantages of want of wealth, as well as dearth of educa-



tion of a high standard. In short, if the 40 millions of inhabitants in Bengal are allowed to draw Rs. 61,752 annually by way of college scholarships, the 15 millions in the Punjab by a simple Rule-of-three, seem entitled to Rs. 23,157 annually for the same purpose.

"This amount would admit of senior and junior scholarships at the Bengal rates being established in the Punjab. I should be very glad to see the Bengal system of awarding the scholarships, as far as they will go, among all candidates, whether belonging to Government or private colleges, affiliated to the Calcutta University, by open competition, and on the results of the University Examinations."

In forwarding the above letter to the Government of India, the Punjab Government observed that—

"It is certain that much of the heavy outlay which has already been incurred on colleges will be in a great measure sacrificed, if the additional stimulus now solicited be withheld at the present critical period."

At last the Government of India had to admit the strong arguments advanced in the letter of the Director of Public Instruction, Punjab. Had they foreseen that higher education would not be appreciated in the Punjab, they would not have given their sanction to the establishment of two expensive colleges in that province. They observed :

"There was nothing in the original recommendations by which the immediate necessity of establishing two expensive colleges in the Punjab was supported, that could have led the Government of India to expect a result such as is now reported ...

"The Governor-General in Council would ask the Punjab Government to impress strongly upon Captain Fuller the impropriety of pressing forward educational projects without, as

in the case of the Punjab colleges, giving the Government to understand the real extent of the expenditure to which he was practically pledging it."

Though the Government of India found out "the impropriety of" Capt Fuller in pressing for the scholarships, they at last sanctioned the grant of stipends. They remarked that

"To every deserving student in the Government colleges who does not obtain a scholarship and whose parents are unable to maintain him at college, a subsistence allowance of Rs. 4 or Rs. 5 per mensem might be given for the present."

Thus the long-drawn-out controversy of awarding scholarships to all the students of the Lahore Government College came to an end. Some provision was at least made for awarding "a subsistence allowance of Rs. 4 or Rs. 5 per mensem" to attract students to this expensive college of the Punjab.

We cannot conclude this brief survey of the condition of education in the Punjab in the latter half of the last century without touching on the movement for the establishment of the Punjab University.

Though the Calcutta University was established as early as 1858, the Punjab could not boast of any University at that early period. The movement for the foundation of the Punjab University was of very late growth. It originated in the time of Sir Donald McLeod, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab. This Punjab satrap was strongly in favour of orientalizing the system of education in that province. He did not like the spread

of Western education in the Punjab. In a letter to the Director of Public Instruction, Punjab, Sir Donald McLeod put forward his view of orientalizing the system of education in the Punjab. On this question the Director of Public Instruction asked the opinion of his assistant, Babu Syama Charan Basu, who had received a sound training under the celebrated educationist, the Rev. Dr. Duff, and who was well acquainted with the famous controversy between the Orientalists and Occidentalists, in which Raja Rammohun Roy had also taken part. To orientalise the system of education would have meant throwing the Punjab backward in the onward march of progress. It would have meant a great disaster to the Punjab. Babu Syama Charan, therefore, opposed this retrograde proposal of Sir Donald McLeod. The letter was at his suggestion sent for consideration to the *Anjuman-i-Punjab*, which owed its origin to the efforts of Babu Syama Charan and Dr. Leitner. When the letter was placed before the *Anjuman-i-Punjab*, Babu Syama Charan proposed the establishment of an institution for the encouragement of the vernaculars of the Punjab. We read in *The Tribune* of 5th December, 1885 :

"The Punjab University was the creation of almost an accident. A meeting was one fine day held in the Siksha Sabha Hall somewhere about the beginning of 1865 and there was some conversation about oriental education. Babu Shama Charan Bose in course of the conversation suggested the formation of an institution which should foster the cultivation of Western as well as Eastern learning. The keen fore-sight of Dr. Leitner looked through the suggestion and he eagerly caught hold of it as capable of indefinite expansion. A scheme was shortly

after drawn up, matured and the proposal of a University was set afloat."

The Punjab University was established shortly afterwards, though unfortunately Babu Syama Charan did not live to see its foundation. He had done his best to organise the Education Department of the Punjab. We shall see presently how he was connected with the Siksha Sabha, Anjuman-i-Punjab, Lahore Government College and the Education Department, Punjab. His son, Sris Chandra, also was brought up and educated in the Punjab. We shall also see how he took a prominent part in the "Students' Rebellion."

## CHAPTER II

### *SRIŚ CHANDRA BASU'S PARENTAGE*

#### *(a) HIS FATHER*

Before we proceed to narrate the life history of our hero, it is desirable to offer a brief sketch of the life of his father Babu Syama Charan Basu. Sris Chandra's many qualities of head and heart were inherited from his noble father. Babu Syama Charan was one of the few officers of the Punjab who did much for the improvement of the country. His memory is still revered by many in remembrance of the noble services rendered by him.'

Babu Syama Charan was born of a high Kayastha family in July 1827 in a village named Tengra-Bhawanipur, Bansdaha Post Office, Satkhira Sub-division, which then formed part of the 24-Parganas, but has now been transferred to the Khulna District of Bengal. In those early days education had not made much headway in the villages. So, with other boys, Syama Charan received his early elementary education in the village *pathashala*. From there he was brought to Calcutta and was educated in the celebrated Christian missionary Alexander Duff's school. This training in Dr. Duff's school afterwards helped him much in his life. It rendered him eminently fit for the educational work which he afterwards took up.

While Syama Charan was undergoing his training, many changes were taking place in the political history

of India. The British were extending their empire in the north-west. After the death of Ranjit Singh, the Punjab fell an easy prey to political intrigues. In a short time the British Government managed to annex the Punjab.

Syama Charan was then a young man of twenty-two years of age. He had not yet formed any plan of earning his livelihood. In 1849 he made up his mind to try his fortune in the land of the Five Rivers. He came to Lahore and was fortunate enough in securing the post of Head Master of the American Mission School. For two years (1850 and 1851) he worked in this capacity to the entire satisfaction of the authorities. The Revd. Mr. Forman, under whose supervision the school was managed, entertained a very high opinion of him. He wrote :

"I consider him far superior to the mass of his countrymen, even the educated part of them, in intelligence and probity."

Again, in a letter dated Lahore, 28th August, 1855, to Mr. J. Penn, in charge of Pension Pay Office, Lahore, Revd Mr. Forman wrote regarding him. :

"He has naturally good abilities also, and if I mistake not, better moral principles than are often found in people in any part of India. I have had good opportunities of knowing him, as he was for some time the Head Master of our school."

Amongst his pupils in the Lahore Mission School, who afterwards distinguished themselves by their zeal in the cause of social and religious reforms and other activities, are to be mentioned, Lalas Gandamal and Sobha Ram, Pandit Amar Nath and others.

He was not a Christian and so he was not in his element in a Christian Mission School, from which he

severed his connection early in 1852 and entered Government service.

Joining the Commissioner's Office, Lahore, in 1852, Syama Charan served there for over four years. Mr. F R. Scarlett with whom he served in that office, in a testimonial to him, dated 30th October, 1855, wrote :

"The work which he has had to perform has been of a miscellaneous nature, such as drafting letters, docketing, preparing indices of correspondence, examining papers, despatching, translating, etc. etc. In the performance of each and all of these duties he has evinced uncommon intelligence, which bears full testimony to the high standard of education, both in English and Persian (which he can read and write with facility), that he has received and to his knowledge of official duties.

"While thus doing justice to his abilities, I cannot pass over without notice his character. Enjoying the benefits and advantages of a long and useful course of training in a distinguished missionary institution at Calcutta, and having subsequently passed upwards of two years as Head Master in the Lahore Mission, School, under the immediate knowledge of the Revd. Mr. Forman he early imbibed, and has since acted upon, those wholesome principles which are the neverfailing results of a good English and Christian education."

He was the second clerk in the Commissioner's office, Lahore, when, on the formation of the Educational Department in the Punjab in consequence of Mr. Wood's Education Despatch, he was selected for the responsible post of Head Clerk of the Department, on Rs. 200 a month. But by joining the Education Department he lost his future prospects, as that Department could not offer him the same pay and prospects of promotion as other civil departments. Even Captain Fuller, the Director

of Public Instruction, Punjab, wrote to the Secretary to Government Punjab :

"My Head Clerk, Baboo Shama Charan Bose, entered this office in the expectation of obtaining an Inspectorship or Joint-Inspectorship, as in the N. W. Provinces, and, by quitting the ordinary Civil Department, he lost the chance of certain periodical promotions, and of attaining to the grade of Extra Assistant Commissioner."

As stated in the first chapter, Mr. W. D. Arnold was the first Director of Public Instruction, Punjab. He was not an educationist by profession, and his past career was not such as to have singled him out as the chief of the Educational Department. He did not possess any University degree, but served in the Indian Army. His appointment as Director of Public Instruction, Punjab, on a salary of Rs. 1,200 a month, called forth the following remarks from the authorities of the East India Company in England :

"We do not think that the change in his (Mr. Arnold's) position consequent on his retirement from our military service was in itself a sufficient reason for the increase of his salary from Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 1,200."

It may appear as a puzzle to our readers as to why a man of the qualifications of Mr Arnold was appointed to the post of D. P. I. in the Punjab. The reason is not far to seek. The annexation of the Punjab to the British dominions in India was brought about by peculiarly Christian methods and hence every effort was being made to convert it into a model Christian Province. To effect this, it was necessary to fill every post of trust and responsibility with highly professing Christians. Mr.



William Delafield Arnold was the son of the Revd. Doctor Thomas Arnold of Rugby and was brought up under Christian influence. This perhaps satisfactorily accounts for his appointment to the high office, mentioned above.

It was rather fortunate for Mr. W. D. Arnold that he had such an efficient and experienced Head Clerk as Babu Syama Charan, who made the Department a success. He organised it and made Western education popular in the land of the Five Rivers.

Within a year after the establishment of the Educational Department in the Punjab the Indian Mutiny broke out in 1857. During those days the newly annexed province of the Punjab, its leaders demoralized and ill-treated, was forced to contribute men and money for the suppression of the Mutiny. How the then Christian administrator of that Province, Sir John Lawrence, effected this, has been narrated by Major B. D. Basu, I. M. S., (Retd.) in his *Rise of the Christian Power in India*. Although the Mutiny did not extend to the Punjab, for it was forcibly kept down by Christian soldiers' bayonets, yet the British officials and their staff passed through very anxious times. The Education Department was no exception. The way in which Babu Syama Charan managed the affairs of its office at that critical time, elicited praise from the Punjab Government. Thus, in his letter, No. 304, dated 30th July 1858, the Financial Commissioner wrote to the Secretary, Chief Commissioner, Punjab :

"Para 39. I can corroborate also to a great extent, from my personal knowledge, the high praise which Mr. Arnold bestows

on the Head of his English office, Baboo Shama Charn Bose, and was much struck with the quiet and steady manner in which he carried on the duties of his office during the period of excitement in May and June, 1857, when it was struggling with great difficulties, and had twice to be removed owing to the place occupied by it being required for other purposes."

Again, in his letter No. 200, dated 14th August, 1858, the Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Punjab, wrote to the Secretary to the Government of India, that "the Chief Commissioner particularly commended . . . Shama Churn, the Head of the Director's office."

But what was his reward for his loyal services during the Mutiny? It has already been stated before that he had joined the Educational Department in the expectation of getting an Inspectorship of Schools. In 1858, by the transfer of Delhi to the Punjab, a new Inspectorship was created. Babu Syama Charan thought that in consideration of his loyal and approved services, he would be appointed to that office. He wrote about it to Mr. Arnold, who was at that time away from Lahore enjoying the cool breezes of the Himalayas. In reply, Mr. Arnold wrote the following letter dated, Dharamsalah, April 11th, 1858 :

'Baboo Sahib I have received your letter of the 12th March, though not till within the last few days.

"I hope myself that there will be some more opening than there is at present in this department, for natives of high character and ability. But at present the European element in the department is too small, and the new Inspector should be an Englishman ; were a native Inspector to be appointed, there is no one whom I consider better qualified for the office than yourself."

The above lines call for serious remarks for more than one reason. The man best fitted for the post was not appointed, because he did not happen to be a European. Efficiency was sacrificed for providing loaves and fishes to 'colourless' persons, for whose sake India seemed to exist.

The real reason which prompted this son of a Christian Doctor of Divinity to recommend an European to the post was that he did not want any Indian in any high post of honour and distinction in this country. About the time when he was penning the above reply to his Head Clerk, he was writing an article, entitled "English Faults and Indian Calumnies," for *The Calcutta Review*, which was published in that Journal in December, 1858. Following the example of the *Edinburgh Review*, articles were not signed by their authors for publication in *The Calcutta Review*. But in the *Selections from The Calcutta Review*, the above named article appears, bearing the name of Mr. W. D. Arnold. In the course of this article, he wrote :

"The English liberals have forgotten this essential distinction between England and India, that whereas you can scarcely govern the Englishman too little, you can scarcely govern the Indian too much.... The greatest insult you can offer an Englishman is to over-govern him ; the greatest oppression you can inflict on a Hindustani is to let him alone."

This shows the bitter hatred of Mr. Arnold, the D. P. I. of the Punjab, towards the people of the country he was serving.

Mr. Arnold was also not in favour of the Native States

being ruled by the native princes. He would not leave a single native prince in the possession of his State, because he held that

"it is still as true as ever it was, that tall poppies are not safe"

Regarding the policy of annexation, Mr. Arnold remarked :

"It nevertheless may often be, as it often has been, our plain duty and unavoidable task to annex, whether we like it or not... once concede that principle (of non-annexation), and we must quit India."

After a perusal of the above, no surprise need be felt at the conduct of Mr. Arnold. He belonged to that class of 'colourless' Christians in India regarding whom Kaye wrote, "the sight of the dark skin sealed up their sympathies." Although brought up under Christian influences from his cradle, he did not possess any sense of justice or fairplay for the indigenous races of Hindustan.

But as a sop for the injustice that he was doing to Babu Syama Charan in not recommending him for the post of Inspector, he held out the hope to him to increase his salary. He wrote in the same letter from which an extract has been given above :

"But, although I can hold out no hope to you of what you at present desire. I have written to the Financial Commissioner on the subject of increasing the prospective salary of your present situation, and I hope that his reply will be favourable, and that Government will not refuse the application when it is made officially."

Babu Syama Charan was not recommended for Inspectorship, for had he been appointed an Inspector, there

was nothing to prevent him from becoming the Director of Public Instruction of the Punjab in due course of time. A "native" at the head of the Educational Department did not find favour with the Christian authorities of the Punjab. For even after a quarter of a century from the date when Mr. Arnold wrote that the European element in the Department was too small and hence "the new Inspector should be an Englishman," no native was considered good enough to be appointed Inspector of Schools in the Punjab.

The Financial Commissioner, however, recommended the increase of Babu Syama Charan's salary to Rupees 250 a month. In communicating his fact to his Head Clerk, Mr. Arnold wrote from Amballa, on April 17th, 1858 :

"You know, however, that it does not rest either with me or the Financial Commissioner to authorize it."

The matter had to be referred to England, as Mr. Arnold wrote to him, in his letter dated the 27th, September, 1858 :

"Whether your increased salary, as applied for, can be granted under the recent orders of the Hon'ble Court without a reference to England, is, I fear, doubtful, but in the case of disappointment you will, I trust, find some consolation in the hearty recommendation of your official superiors."

Shortly afterwards, Mr. Arnold left India for England, which he was, however, not destined to see, as he died on his way. His tragic end has been commemorated by his brother Matthew Arnold, in one of his poems.

Mr. Arnold was no friend of India or of Indians. This is quite evident from what he wrote in *The Calcutta Review* for December, 1858, which has been already referred

to above. A few more extracts from the same article will show his bitter hatred of everything Indian. Thus he said about the policy of Europeanizing India and of shutting Indians from high posts :

"No amount of slippery rhetoric can disguise the fact that the aims, hopes, fears, desires, loves and hates of an Asiatic and a European, are opposed the one to the other. So long as we are in this country, our history will consist in making the Asiatic view of life bend to the European. If this is tyranny, let us be gone. But if we stay, let us have no hypocrisy. We cannot and ought not to look on life with Asiatic eyes. Our tendency is and must be to Europeanize. Toleration, sympathy, tact may help as they have helped, to make this process less obnoxious, because less palpable to the natives. But the process goes on and will go on. And with the people which has to yield to it, it never can and never will be popular . . . But to high offices natives cannot be admitted, because according to our ideas they are not to be trusted. Are our ideas or theirs to prevail? We cannot employ natives in high posts more than we have done. The doubt is whether we can do so as much. Natives may be just as good as we are ; their morality may be as pure as ours, but something very different ; and when the two moralities clash, we have expressed our opinion as to which must go to the wall."

Mr. Arnold of military fame thus clearly expressed his views on the Europeanisation of India. He said : "Our tendency is, and must be to Europeanize." His lack of sympathy towards Indian aspirations is clear when he says : "But to high offices natives cannot be admitted, because according to our ideas they are not to be trusted."

Mr. Arnold did not possess any sense of honour or honesty, not to say gratitude, for he abused and hated

the people out of whose revenue he was enabled to feed and clothe himself and his family. His conduct towards Babu Syama Charan was perfidious, for it was almost certain that the latter would not have left the appointment in the Commissioner's office which would have promoted him in due course of time to the grade of Extra Assistant Commissioner, had he not been given to understand that he would be made an Inspector of Schools as soon as it was possible.

It was, however, not till May 1859, that Babu Syama Charan got the lift to the grade of Rs. 250. This was announced to him by Lieutenant E. H. Paske (who had been appointed to officiate for Mr. Arnold) in his letter, dated Dharamsala, 14th May, 1859, saying that "from the 1st instant you will receive Rs 250 per mensem, instead of, as heretofore, Rs. 200 per mensem."

On the eve of his retirement from the Education Department Lieutenant Paske, in a Minute dated 13th June 1860, wrote :

"Before retiring from employment in the Education Department in the Punjab, I desire to bear testimony to the zeal and efficiency with which Baboo Shama Charan Bose has conducted his duties as Head Clerk in the office of the Director of Public Instruction. On the first organisation of the Department in 1856, Baboo Shama Charan was selected by the late Mr. W. D. Arnold for the post of Head Clerk in this office, and has served in that capacity up to the present time... Baboo Shama Charan has received a very good education, and is a capital English scholar; he is a man of an enlightened mind, and free from prejudice... I shall be glad to hear of his advancement; for I consider him a superior man, and one deserving of much consideration."

Captain Fuller was appointed permanent Director in succession to Lieutenant Paske in June 1860. It was a singular coincidence that both of them died in August 1867. The end of Captain Fuller was very tragic and it will be mentioned presently. The new Director of Public Instruction, like his predecessors, was "much indebted to the painstaking care of Baboo Shama Churn Bose" "for the successful working of the details" of his office, "which, with the growth of education in the Punjab," were "daily becoming more onerous." (Reports of the Educational Department, Punjab for 1860-61 and 1861-62).

In his letter, No. 222, dated 27th November, 1862, Captain Fuller wrote to the Secretary to the Punjab Government that Baboo Syama Charan Bose entered his office "in the expectation of obtaining an Inspectorship, or Joint-Inspectorship, as in the N.-W. Provinces; and by quitting the ordinary civil department, he lost the chance of certain periodical promotions, and of attaining to the grade of Extra Assistant Commissioner. Had he remained with it he would no doubt have held by this time the post of Head Clerk in a Commissioners' office, at any rate the lowest salary of which is Rupees 300. He was highly praised by the late Mr. Arnold, my predecessor, for his 'conduct during the mutiny.' This was concurred in by the Financial Commissioner, and led to his receiving an increase of salary up to its present amount of Rupees 250 per mensem from 1st May, 1859. The extension of education since that period in the Punjab has been very great, and the duties and



responsibilities of the Head Clerk are very much heavier. I beg, therefore, to recommend *more strongly* that his salary be raised from 250 to 300 per mensem from 1st May next."

But the Government at that time turned a deaf ear to Captain Fuller's strong recommendation, and Babu Syama Charan's salary was not increased to Rs. 300. So Captain Fuller wrote in his letter No. 37, dated 27th January, 1864 to the Secretary to the Punjab Government, soliciting "sanction to the bestowal of a reward of Rs. 300 to Baboo Shama Charan Bose, Head Clerk of this office, in recognition of his excellent services, there being no opportunity of re-distributing salaries as suggested by the Supreme Government, so as to permanently improve his position."

His salary, however, was afterwards raised to Rs. 300 a month.

The strain to which he was subjected by the conscientious performance of his official duties was so great, that it broke his health and he suffered from diabetes to which he succumbed in August 1867 at the early age of forty. His death was referred to in the Popular Report of Education in the Punjab for 1867-68 as follows :

"Babu Shama Charan Bose was compelled by ill-health to take six months' leave of absence in May 1867 and in August of the same year he died, after having filled the post of Head Clerk in the Directors' office since the first establishment of the Educational Department in 1856. During the whole of that time he maintained the highest character and displayed in the

discharge of his duties the greatest integrity, diligence and ability..."

*Report on Popular Education in the Punjab and its dependencies for the year 1867-68* By Capt. W. R. M. Holroyd, Director of Public Instruction, Punjab, p. 50.)

On hearing the news of his death Major Fuller, who was at that time on the Punjab Frontier, left for Lahore, but unfortunately he was swept away by a sudden rush of water whilst crossing a mountain torrent on the road between Muree and Rawalpindi. Major Fuller was hastening to Lahore to do something for the bereaved family and arrange for the management of the landed property of Babu Syama Charan, which was known to be considerable. Babu Syama Charan was granted six months' leave from May 1867. Major Fuller had visited him in his illness before going to the hills. As his condition was critical, he had requested his chief to look after the family in the event of his death. To the credit of Major Fuller it must be said that he meant to do so. It was regarding this trait in his character that Captain Holroyd wrote in his Report :

"He was singularly free from prejudice, and a warm friend to the natives ; regarding whose capability, when properly educated, for holding the highest offices in the State, he held the most advanced views."

The landed property left by Babu Syama Charan was such that, had it been placed under the Court of Wards, it would have enabled his family to live comfortably. But those Bengalis who posed as his friends turned a deaf ear to this proposal when made to them, for that would not have suited their interests ; since they were bent upon

profiting at the cost of the widow and orphans of Babu Syama Charan. Major Fuller, who was also coming to the help of his family, met with a tragic death. So, the children of Babu Shyama Charan, the eldest Sris Chandra at that time about six years old and the youngest, BamanDas, a baby of five months, had to pass through the ordeal of adversity.

On the untimely death of Babu Syama Charan, the *Indian Public Opinion*, of 16th August, 1867, which was conducted by Sir Lepel Griffin and Dr. Leitner, paid a tribute to his memory in the following terms :

"We deeply regret to hear of the death of Babu Syama Charan Bose, one of the most enlightened and respectable members of the excellent Bengali colony, which we have in our midst at Lahore. The deceased gentleman took considerable interest in all matters affecting the welfare of his adoptive country and together with other Bengalis threw himself actively into all movements which sometime ago reflected credit on this province. He was a Vedantist by persuasion, a most amiable man and an accomplished English scholar. As Head Clerk of the Educational Department, much of the credit assigned to its chief deservedly belongs to this well-known native gentleman, whose loss, we are sure, is sincerely felt in the community to which he belonged."

(b) SRIS CHANDRA BASU'S MOTHER

That mariner will be called bold and competent who carries his bark to the haven of safety when the sea is rough, and abounds in rocks, and the weather is foul. In the sea of life also, that person should be credited with genius who struggles with adverse circumstances and works for the welfare of those committed to his or her charge. Such was the mother of Sris Chandra. She became

a widow at the age of about thirty with four children to bring up—the eldest a daughter of seven, the second Sris Chandra of 6, the third a daughter of about three, and the last Baman Das, a babe in arms hardly five months old.

Babu Syama Charan was known as a "Rais" of Lahore and lived in aristocratic style. This he was able to do, because the purchasing power of the rupee was then far greater than now. He retained about a dozen domestic servants and moved in the highest circles of Lahore. He had built a palatial house for his residence, kept a garden outside the city walls and possessed several villages, and also derived a considerable income by lending money to needy persons. He did not invest money in Government securities ; because, in his opinion, "a large amount of public debt is prejudicial to the people who invest their capital in public securities, (1) physically, by making them idle and slothful, (2) intellectually, by making them thoughtless and unenterprising, and (3) circumstantially, by making them lonely and retired and mutilated of pecuniary means."

But after his death, men who were indebted to him for being settled in life did not scruple to cheat his widow and orphans. The landed properties, furniture, library, carriages and cattle of Babu Syama Charan were all sold and the prices realized were not all paid to his widow. She with her children went to live in a small rented house and realising her position cheerfully performed all those domestic duties for which, during the life time of her husband, half a dozen or more servants were at her beck and call. Reduced to penury, she

depended on her ornaments, from the sale of which she married her daughters, educated the sons and maintained them in comfort.

She was remarkable for her strong common and moral sense and high character in the broadest sense of that expression. She was not an educated lady according to the modern standard. Her cultural equipment was confined to the study of Kirtibas's Bengali *Ramayana*, Kasiram Das's Bengali *Mahabharata* and a Bengali translation of the *Gita*. These books she read over and over again. Rising early in the morning between 4 and 5, after ablution, she performed her daiy worship and then attended to domestic affairs, from preparing the meals of the family to the cutting and sewing of the clothes of her children. Becoming a widow at an early age, she had to struggle hard for the rearing up of the children. It was, therefore, that she had to learn several arts to enable her to do without the services of the cook and the tailor.

Although she was very strict in the performance of her religious duties and the observance of the vows of Hindu widows, she was enlightened enough to favour the re-admission into caste of those who had been baptised as Christians or gone to England for study. When one of her relations turned a Christian, she advised his parents to take him back into the family and promised that if they were outcasted, she would dine with them and would not treat them as outcasts.

When her youngest son returned from England, there was a great agitation in the orthodox and backward

Bengali community of Allahabad against taking him back in society. She was advised by the old fools who posed as leaders of that community not to allow him to live in the same house with her, but to lodge him in some hotel or bungalow outside the city. She did not act on their advice and in consequence had to suffer the penalty of excommunication by some of the orthodox members of that community. But she lived long enough to see the dwindling influence of orthodoxy in Allahabad as far as the readmission into Hindu society of England-returned Hindus was concerned.

She died in September, 1921, at the advanced age of 84 and had to pay the penalty of longevity by witnessing the death of her two sons-in-law, one widowed daughter, of her eldest son Sris Chandra and several other members of the household. She bore all the calamities which befell her with calm resignation to the will of God.

## CHAPTER III

### *SYAMA CHARAN BASU'S SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC*

In the last chapter has been given a resume of the official career of Babu Syama Charan. Before and after him, many Indians have occupied more important and lucrative posts in Government service than Babu Syama Charan. They were paid to do the work entrusted to them. Their official posts did not entitle them to the love and respect of the public. For winning people's estimation, one should identify oneself with their interests and work for their weal and try to advance their cause. Babu Syama Charan understood this so well that, although he was not a born native of the Punjab, he made that province his land of adoption and worked hard for its advancement and welfare. Even while employed as a Government servant, he did not forget his duty to his countrymen out of whose revenue he was enabled to earn his living. Their cause was so dear to his heart that he never betrayed their interests to gain the favour or smile of his foreign official superiors.

It has been said before that, because the Punjab was annexed by peculiarly Christian methods, hence every attempt was being made to convert it into a model Christian province. With this object in view, highly professing Christians were appointed to all posts of honour and trust.\* One of them was Colonel Herbert Edwardes.

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\* See the chapter on 'Christianisation of India' in *Consolidation of the Christian Power in India*, by Major B. D. Basu.

To keep the Punjab servile and serve their interests, "enlightened selfishness" prompted the Christian rulers of India to give as little education as possible to the people of that province. If there was awakening of national consciousness in the martial races of the Punjab, they would surely clamour for their rights and privileges as loudly as the people of Bengal were doing. After the death of Lord Elgin, Sir John Lawrence was appointed Viceroy and Governor-General of India and as such he lived in Calcutta, where at that time the people were agitating day after day for their rights and privileges. The Anglo-Indian bureaucracy did not relish this.

To prevent such a state of affairs occurring in the Punjab, the bureaucracy were averse to diffuse high education in that province. Sir John Lawrence, bred in the traditions of that bureaucracy, shared their views and opinions. How he played the tyrant in the Punjab, which made even his brother Sir Henry Lawrence disgusted with him, has been narrated in Major B. B. Basu's *Rise of the Christian Power in India*. When the proposal for the establishment of the Government College at Lahore went up to him for sanction, he at first refused it.

Orientalization of education in India seemed to have been set at rest when Lord William Bentinck approved of Macaulay's minute on Education in India and declared "that the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India ; and that all the funds appropriated for the purposes of education would be best employed on English education alone." (Major B. D. Basu's



*History of Education in India under the Rule of the East India Company*, p. 84)

But three decades afterwards an attempt was made from political considerations to orientalize education in the Punjab. Sir Donald MacLeod, who succeeded Sir Robert Montgomery as Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab in 1865, possessed the reputation of being a zealous Christian and noted orientalist. He wanted to orientalize education in that province. With this object in view, he wrote a letter to the Director of Public Instruction, Punjab. It was due to Babu Syama Charan's influence that the Punjab was saved that calamity. The Lieutenant-Governor's letter, as has been pointed out before, was, however, at his suggestion, forwarded to the *Anjuman-i-Punjab*, a literary society that had been, through his and Dr. Leitner's exertions, brought into existence. It was at a meeting of this Society, that he suggested the formation of an institution which took the shape of the Punjab University.

"So the credit," wrote the *Pioneer* on the 22nd December, 1912, "of suggesting the establishment of the Punjab University belongs to Babu Shama Charan Bose, who did not see it established, as he died not long afterwards at the early age of forty."

Outside the routine work of the Government service, he found time to organize and take part in all those movements which aimed at the amelioration of the condition of the people of the Punjab. That in education lay the salvation of the people was so well understood by him that he was not content with what he could do and actually did for its spread by the State agency, but

tried also for its extension by private enterprise. With this 'object in view, he was instrumental in establishing the *Siksha Sabha* at Lahore for specially popularising the cause of female education in the Punjab. How zealously he worked for the cause of female education was borne testimony to by Sir Robert Montgomery, who on the eve of his retirement from the Lieutenant-Governorship of the Punjab considered it necessary to favour him with the following unsolicited testimonial :

"Baboo Syama Charan of the Educational Department has always zealously supported the cause of Female Education, in testimony of which I give him this. I trust he will rise still higher in his own department. This certificate has been unsolicited by him."

January 9th, 1865

(Sd.) R. Montgomery."

Sir Robert Montgomery merely expressed a pious wish when he wrote, "I trust he will rise still higher in his own department." For, it should be remembered that as Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab he did nothing to improve the position of Babu Syama Charan in the service. The Hon'ble J. T. Hovel-Thurlow wrote thus in his *India Under the Company and the Crown* regarding this Christian ruler :

"Under Providence all this has been effected by a pleasant-looking man of middle height, whose benign appearance militates against the known severity of his decisions. In him regular attendance at divine service, audible repetition of the responses, and large participation in all missionary works, did not prove incompatible with, displace, or mitigate, the readiness with which he had resort to capital punishment, or applauded a liberal use of rope by the junior members of his administration. This

peculiar feature in a man so gifted as Sir Robert Montgomery has not escaped the keen observation of some previous writers, and Mr. Martin quotes, in his *'Progress and Present State of British India,'* a letter dated 'Lahore, Sunday, 9 A. M.,' wherein the Lieutenant-Governor congratulates Mr. Frederick Cooper, one of his so-called hanging commissioners, in the warmest terms, on the manner in which the 20th Regiment of Native Infantry had been by him blotted out of the book of life for some imagined signs of disaffection, adding, 'Three other regiments here were very shaky yesterday, but I hardly think they will go now. I wish they would, as they are a nuisance, and not a man would escape, if they do'. Mr. Martin holds that this rejoicing over the extermination of a thousand men, and eagerness to find a pretext for the destruction of three thousand more, reads strangely from the pen of one of the most prominent advocates for the propagation of Christianity in India, but it explains in his eyes why 'our success as subjugators has been attended by failure as evangelists." Pp. 82-83, Allahabad reprint.

#### FEMALE EDUCATION IN THE PUNJAB

In the sixties of the last century, there were more girls' schools in the Panjab than in any other province of India. In the Note on Education in India for 1866-67, it is stated (at p. 66, paragraph 101),

"Female education has not been neglected as in Bombay and Madras."

This shows the impetus given to female education by the Educational Department, the Head Clerk of which had a hand in this, as is evident from the testimonial of Sir Robert Montgomery.

The following extract from Mr. A. M. Monteath's Note on the State of Education in India during 1865-66, p. 30, will

show that the Punjab had more girls' schools and scholars than any other province in India.

NUMBER OF INSTITUTIONS FEMALE  
GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS  
OPEN TO GOVERNMENT INSPECTION,  
STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1865-66.

Number of Government Institutions.				Number of Private Institutions.			
	No.	No. of pupils	Expenses	No. aided	unaided	No. of pupils aided unaided	Expenses aided unaided
Bengal North-Western Province	3	153	Rs. 7,410	192	25	5070	489
	497	9,269	20,698	77		1494	14,460
Punjab	333	6,834	10,487	696		12,727	25,100
Madras	...	...	...	139		3,315	5,617
Bombay	33	...	...	...		...	...
Oude Central Provinces	...	...	...	11		270	2,726
	92	2,361	83	...		...	...
Mysore	...	...	...	7		345	3,010

Babu Syama Charan was the first Indian to have served as a Head Master in a school. It was then a novelty in Lahore. So he was familiarly known as and called "Master Syama Charan."

THE BENGALI COMMUNITY IN LAHORE

The offices in Lahore with its Cantonment Meean Meer were then manned mostly by Bengalis. So the number

of Bengalis, including women and children, reached very nearly four figures. But almost all these Bengalis were half-educated persons and did not possess any high ideals or aspirations. Before the advent of Babus Pratul Chandra Chatterjee and Kali Prasanna Roy (who went to Lahore after the death of Babu Syama Charan), there was no Bengali at Lahore who was not a Government servant. In the Bengali community there was no higher activity of any kind. Babu Syama Charan felt it and tried what little he could to infuse life into it. In his house he invited the Bengalis to meet and listen to religious discourses and Vedantic discussions. For the education of boys and girls of the Bengali community, he established a school at Lahore.

Outside Bengal, Bengalis always claim hospitality at the hands of the local Bengali settlers. Babu Syama Charan being the head of the Bengali residents at Lahore kept an open house where a large number of Bengalis found food and shelter every day. A *Kali-bari* (Kali's temple and rest-house) was also established at Lahore mainly through his exertions.

A very large number of young men—Bengalis, Hindustanis and Punjabis—visited him every day for employment in public offices, including the Educational Department. He helped them as much as lay in his power. He found the applicants for the most part ignorant of official duties and had to be trained for being made efficient clerks. No one perhaps at that time in the Punjab was so well acquainted with the details of office correspondence, etc., as he was. So

he prepared the "Official Monitor," the first part of which was printed and published in 1862. In the preface, it was stated :

"When we observe the vast number of English students who are destined to commence their career as clerks, we can hardly deny the paramount importance of providing for a special education, calculated to initiate these students into the profession which is to support them in their after-life. But want of elementary books for accomplishing this object on behalf of the youths when in school, or while under private tuition, offers at present the chief difficulty in this necessary department of education. To supply this deficiency has been the humble attempt of the compiler of the following pages, entitled the *Official Monitor*, which he sincerely hopes, will, at least partially, answer the purpose for which they are intended, *to enable students to learn office business as an elementary branch of knowledge, while under scholastic discipline.*"

The school books published under the auspices of the Punjab Education Department at that time were greatly admired for their excellence. Their production was inspired by Babu Syama Charan. The courses and subjects treated in them were also suggested by him.

In the fifties and sixties of the last century, the "Vakil Raj" was not in existence in the Punjab. The number of Indians who could speak and write correct intelligible English was also very limited in that province, where at that time the revenue settlement was in progress. Hence Babu Syama Charan was sought after by those who had any business to transact with Government or its officials. Petition writing was a very paying job in those days. The influence which he carried with the

officials from the Lieutenant-Governor downwards made litigants crowd round him to represent their cause for the favourable consideration of the officials concerned.

In diverse ways Babu Syama Charan rendered many other services to the Punjab which endeared him to the people of that province. When he died, there was universal mourning for him at Lahore. This feeling of sorrow was rightly expressed by the *Indian Public Opinion*, when it said :

"We deeply regret to hear of the death of Babu Syama Charan Bose, one of the most enlightened and respectable members of the excellent Bengali colony, which we have in our midst at Lahore."

A suitable memorial would have been ere long raised in the Punjab, had that Province appreciated the services rendered by Babu Syama Charan. He was one of the chief makers of the young Punjab. He also lived much in advance of his time.

### APPENDIX TO CHAPTER III

Regarding Syama Charan Basu's love of truth, Revd. J. Newton in a testimonial awarded to him, dated Meerut, 20th October, 1851, wrote :

"It may be especially mentioned that he has a much more just apprehension of truth than most of his countrymen."

Again, Revd. C. W. Forman bore testimony to the same marked trait in his character. In a testimonial dated 15th January 1852, he wrote as follows :

"I consider him far superior to the mass of his countrymen, even the educated part of them, in intelligence and probity."

In writing to Mr. Penn, in a letter dated Lahore 28th August, 1855, Rev. Mr. C. W. Forman said :

"If I mistake not he has better moral principles than are often found in any part of India."

Regarding his advocacy of female education, Sir Robert Montgomery, on the eve of his retirement from the office of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab in an unsolicited testimonial to him, dated 9th January, 1865, wrote :

"Babu Shyama Churn of the Educational department has always zealously supported the cause of female education."

"He was a Vedantist by persuasion,"—this was, mentioned in his obituary notice which appeared in the *Indian Public Opinion* of Lahore, dated 16th August, 1867.

How interested he was in morals is evident from the fact that he suggested the publication of a Moral Gazette.

In one of his notes Babu Shyama Charan wrote :

"All the religious systems of the world are framed not so much to represent *truth* and *fact* as they are in themselves, but with a view to restrain man from committing any harm either to himself or to any of his fellow creatures. It is the Vedantic philosophy of the Hindus which treats of truth in its absolute shape without qualifying it with any fictitious attribute."



## CHAPTER IV

### SYAMA CHARAN BASU'S VIEWS AND OPINIONS

Excepting Part I of the "Official Monitor," published, as said before, in 1862, no other work of Babu Syama Charan appeared in print. He read some papers before the *Anjuman-i-Punjab*, notes or abstracts of which appeared in the public journals. From his Notes, it seems he contemplated writing works on several subjects, which he was prevented from accomplishing by the pressure of official and other works. Here we give some of his views and opinions on different subjects.

Babu Syama Charan Basu was a keen student of Hinduism. He made a deep study of the Hindu religion and tried to find out the beauties of Hinduism. In one of his papers, he tried to point out the salient features of the Hindu religion. He wrote :

"Beauties of Hinduism consist in—

(a) cleanliness of all kinds.

(b) Social purity and safety from all sorts of noxious contaminations.

(c) Purity of blood, which is the direct result of the distinction of caste.

(d) Hence the chastity of women, which is also the result of perpetual widowhood of women.

(e) One of the most excellent results of the distinction of caste is that it precludes the Hindoos from forming any extensive combination or being addicted to national intrigues : hence the

*Hindoo is the most harmless, the most peaceful and the most cosmopolitan citizen of the world.*

(f) Absence of a system of national or public worship makes the Hindoo really religious in his private character, so that his religion is not for the purpose of public show or manifestation but for private practice. Hence it is that among people possessing a system of public worship there are found characters which display shining piety within the walls of the church but in their private and individual capacities they are perhaps worse than the devils.

(g) The most minute and detailed provisions made in the Hindoo scriptures for all classes of people, all ages and stations of life, are sufficient to keep the people happy and contented for all their lives and circumstances : and for this reason it is found that there are fewer of those desperate characters existing among the Hindoos than among any other people on earth. Consequently there is less sin, less vice, less disturbance and distress among the Hindoos than among any other people. On these grounds we may safely pronounce the Hindoos, notwithstanding their dependence, to be the happiest and best people on the earth."

He was also a great believer in the Vedantic Philosophy. He thought that the Vedantic religion is favourable to the peace and prosperity of the world. He thus wrote :

"In refutation of all the insinuations that the Vedantic religion is not favourable to the *peace and prosperity* of the world, and that instead of improving the domestic, social and political condition of the people who are its followers, it makes them apathetic to all such obligations, it (Vedantic Religion) makes rather atheistic than moral and religious people—it can be most confidently advanced that all these sayings are quite groundless ; that there is no proof either historical or traditional that could show such a retrograde state of things as the result of Vedantism

from the beginning of the world. But on the contrary it could be most satisfactorily proved that both in ancient and modern times wherever Vedantism prevailed it made its followers an intelligent, powerful and glorious people : the Hindus are its instances in ancient and the Burmese, Chinese, Nepalese and others are in modern times."

In another place speaking of the Vedantic system of Philosophy he said that its origin is not individual or national strife. Thus he remarked :

"It is evident from the history of all the religions that those religions which are the offsprings of political intrigues, grow with the growth of political power, thrive with their prosperity and decay with their decline. But that religion which is the result of *pure reason* survives the effect of all political revolutions, because it is suited to the state of humankind in general, rather than to a particular state for political purposes.

"From the above it is evident that men of high station alone could be benefited by political religions, but the people of the lower order are the most wretched that could be found among the followers of such a religion. Hence perhaps it is that the poorer people of the Mahommedan and Christian religions are *worse* in all respects than those of the *same order* among *Hindoos*.

"Individual or national strife has been the origin of all the existing religions of the world except the Vedanta system of the *Hindoos*."

Babu Syama Charan Basu gave a high place to the Vedantic Philosophy of the Hindus among all the religious systems of the world. He observed :

"All the religious systems of the world are framed not so much to represent *truth* and *fact* as they are in themselves, as with a view to restrain man from committing any harm either to himself or to any of his fellow creatures. It is the Vedantic philosophy of the Hindus which treats of truth in its

absolute shape without qualifying it with any fictitious attribute—though even it is not free from a *thin* coat for its protection.”

His opinion about the Tantra Sastras of the Hindus is also worth quoting. He remarked :

“The *Tantra* Shastra of the Hindus is the invention of some Royal preceptors, intended to gratify their carnal passions with impunity and of worldly success with easiness, as will be evident from the following reasons :

1. An unbounded license for enjoyment of women.
2. A preference of women who are often brought in contact with persons of high life on business.
3. The articles required for worship being rather of a costly nature.”

It should be noted that he was not in favour of Idolatry and Brahmanism. He considered them to be the cause of the bad condition of the country. He said :—

“Idolatry and Brahmanism combined with the family system are the chief moral evils operating against the prosperity of the country”

In another place he went so far as to observe :

“Idolatry and Brahmanism are religions fitted only to nations who are yet in their *infancy*. These offer difficulties (unsurmountable) to all sorts of progress either intellectual, moral or physical.”

As he was not in favour of Brahmanism, he wanted to do away with it. So he put the question—How to abolish Brahmanism ? He tried to answer the question himself when he said : “By promoting worthy non-Brahmanical persons to the rank of Brahmins.”

It was his belief that “the vast number of religious sects, the multiplicity of castes and the innumerable

differences of social positions in India is the result of political intrigues of her former rulers."

About the reformed Hindoo system his opinion was as follows :

"The reformed Hindoo system embraces all and every circumstance of life to which mankind is subject. This fact alone or at least chiefly has made it impregnable throughout the religious contest of ages gone by ; and the same fact will make it incorruptible and indestructible through the immensity of time yet to come. Indeed this is the only safeguard of the permanency of any system of religion."

Long before the present Hindu mission movement was started, Babu Syama Charan Basu had felt the need of a Hindoo mission to preach the Vedantic doctrines. He said :

"A Hindoo mission organized to preach the pure Vedantic doctrines is calculated to do a greater amount of good in the way of religion than any missions have yet done on this earth."

It has been suggested by many that the Hindus have no system of public worship. Babu Syama Charan Basu was of opinion that "a system of national public worship is practicable among the Hindoos ; as they all profess to believe in the Vedas and in one God."

Again, he said :

"A system of national worship is of *paramount* necessity for India and may be easily introduced among the Hindus with the Vedic religion."

Babu Syama Charan also made a special study of Christianity. So his remarks about Christianity are worth quoting. About the doctrine of equality in Christianity, he said :

"The scheme of reformation projected by Jesus Christ by placing mankind on a footing of *equality*, cannot be effected by any movement merely of a *religious* nature. It is the *political* reformation, which alone is calculated to accomplish such a mighty change."

It may be asked : Why did Jesus Christ confine himself to the land of Palestine in his life-time ? Babu Syama Charan answered this question thus :

"The reasons of Jesus Christ confining himself to the land of Palestine during his life-time appear to be :

1st—His want of geographical knowledge of the surrounding countries.

2nd—His fear of being discovered with all his dodges among strangers, who were naturally more acute and rational than the Jews or the people of Palestine.

3rd—The mysteries of his birth, etc., were somehow or other explained by a section of the priesthood among the Jews in Palestine where he had a better chance of success than anywhere else where those priests had no influence whatever.

4th—It is well known that owing to certain extraneous circumstances the birth of Jesus had excited the jealousy and suspicion of Herod, the King of the Jews. His suspicion however subsided owing to Jesus flying to Egypt. He returned to his native place at a time when peace and confidence were restored in Palestine. But it was not so within the adjoining provinces of the Roman Empire, where owing to the absolute power of the Romans and from the fact of their maintaining a character of being more jealous of their political rivals it was apprehended as certain destruction to be in any way suspected of any sorts of political design and Jesus having all along been an object of suspicion was cautious enough not to quit his native land for fear of losing his life."

The question of the control of popular morality also attracted the attention of Babu Syama Charan. He drew

up a well-thought-out scheme for the control of popular morality. His scheme is quoted below :

Since it has been agreed on all hands that some sort of check is necessary for the increasing prevalence of vice and immorality, there does not appear any need of further argument on the head of expediency of reformation of popular morality. It now only remains to be seen how such a reformation could be safely effected. The compulsory means would not answer. So the scheme must be modified and instead of compulsory, persuasive means may be employed with the aid of Government, just on the same principle as the operations of the Educational Department are based upon. A separate Department may be organised under a supervising officer styled the Inspector General of Popular Morality, with an adequate staff such as sub-inspectors or some other designation as may be suited to their respective callings.

The expense of these officials may be borne by the Local Funds if the Imperial Revenues cannot be appropriated. Local Committees may be established under the designation of Committees for the Reformation of Popular Morality, or under any other appropriate name.

The paid authorities as alluded to above are to act in unison with these committees under the guidance of a set of Rules to be framed by consulting the same Committees. At first it will be necessary to proceed as cautiously as possible so as not to give offence to the popular *feeling*. Some of the grossest of vices should be taken at the outset, such as whoredom, drunkenness, etc. By the time these are checked, a sufficient quantum of experience will be obtained which will enable the Department to trace its own career for further improvement.

A Department thus constituted and its procedure entirely confined to the persuasive method can, it is hoped, scarcely miss its desired object, the amelioration of popular morality. For when Female Education has succeeded inspite of the general disapprobation on the part of the people, it is firmly believed that a

system of control of popular morality will be attended with surer and easier success, in as much as it is commended by universal approbation."

To this original scheme, he added three more paragraphs :

"1st.—A system of rewards is to be arranged.

2nd.—Some punitive measures are to be taken.

3rd.—A Gazette is to be started under the name of the *Moral Gazette*.

On another occasion Babu Syama Charan remarked :

"A well constituted *Moral Society* is calculated to remedy all and every evil that may be found to prevail in the world."

As Babu Syama Charan had been employed in the Education Department, he gave much thought to the problems connected with the education of the country. His opinion on the educational problems is well worth our consideration. He thus defined good education :

Good education consists in (1) elocution, (2) judgment, (3) morality, (4) ability in management of business, and (5) popularity."

He further remarked :

"The formation of habits is the most essential part of all education. And of these, that of reasoning on the manners, customs, character and conduct of man is the most important one."

In another place, he observed :

"A knowledge of domestic, social and commercial economy is the chief desideratum in the system of modern education. It is this want which makes an educated man of these days not only useless, but an unhappy creature."

The foregoing quotations show that Babu Syama



Charan was not satisfied with the system of education prevailing in the country. He, therefore, openly declared :

"The educational scheme of the British Indian Government has been based upon an objectionable principle"

He even went further and declared that "the character of modern education is unsuited to the progress of civilization of the world."

He also suggested ways and means for introducing reforms in the educational system of India. He suggested reforms in the following ways:

"How is Education to be reformed ?

1st—By proper attention being paid to stricter moral discipline the schools.

2nd—By establishing a revised course of studies calculated to increase wisdom, virtue and knowledge of the people."

As regards the education of the children, he observed :

"The first elements of knowledge to be imparted to children should be upon the following subjects:

1st—Self and its relationships, domestic and social,

2nd—Health and temperance.

3rd—Wealth and poverty,

4th—Friendship and enmity."

He did not favour the practice of sending Indian youths for education to England. He pointed out the deep policy underlying this practice in the following words:

"The practice of sending the children from India to England for education has its origin in a deep policy, having a double object in view:

1st—For maintaining a superior standard of education for England *alone* and thereby producing a set of men, such as could not be produced in any other country.

2nd—For keeping the English youths from becoming familiar and sympathetic with the natives of India.”

Let us now turn to his political opinions. How to weaken a Government? He answers this question thus:

“How to weaken a Government?

- (i) Politically
- (ii) Financially
- (iii) Judicially.

I. Politically in its (a) Home and (b) Foreign relations.

1. By creating dissensions amongst its members by any means.

2. By leading to make war or peace with unequal powers.

II. Financially, by causing it to incur *useless and lavish* expenditure. And also by paralysing or destroying its sources of income.

III. Judicially, by ill administration of justice either by corruption or neglect of the judiciary.”

He next considers how to weaken a people? He says:

“How to weaken a people?

- i. To introduce vice and immorality.
- ii. To indulge in litigation.
- iii. To discourage art and science as well as military art.
- iv. To cut off intercourse with other nations.
- v. To ill-treat and abuse continually.
- vi. To lay heavy taxes.”

He did not like the Muhammadan policy of the India Government. He thus expressed his opinion on the subject:

“The Muhammadan policy of the present Government is the result of a sad mistake on the part of its members, as may be proved by reference to the past history of the Government as well as by observing the actual effects which that policy is producing.”

He thus criticised the then constitution of the Council of the Governor-General :

"The present constitution of the Governor-General's Council is highly inconsistent with *any rational* principles of Government, for three reasons, *viz* :

1st. For exclusion from it of a class of people who ought to have the first voice in it

2nd. For admission into it of certain others who from their isolated position ought not to have any voice in it.

3rd. For want of executive authority on the part of the natives in the council."

It should be remembered that the above was written as early as 1865, when the recent changes in the Council of the Viceroy had not been introduced.

He was not in favour of benevolent despotism as practised in India and other countries. He observed :

"Benevolent despotism is allowable, nay expedient, so long as its result is generally favourable, but to continue it beyond that limit is a sure sign of degradation and ultimate ruin."

Though he was a Government servant, he realized how the acceptance of Government service checks the activities of a man. He, therefore, said :

"Government service is a gagging drug to the natives."

As regards the Home charges, he was of opinion that "the Home charges of the British Indian Government are to be regulated in consultation with the Indian (*i. e.*, the Calcutta) Government."

In the judicial department he was in favour of a system of private arbitration, as suggested by Mahatma Gandhi in these days. Thus he wrote :

"How could the British Policy as manifested in the Judicial department be effectually and easily counteracted?"

"By establishing a system of private arbitration with the universal consent of the people."

He also deplored the tension between the Hindus and the Moslems in the country. He was anxious for Hindu-Moslem unity. He said :

"It is a great evil in Bengal that the Hindoo and Mahomedan sections of its population are at extreme differences. Something should be done for their *union*."

This was written in 1865 long before the popular cry of Hindu-Moslem unity was raised.

He was also a firm believer in liberty or Swaraj as it is now called. He said :

"No improvement, either domestic, social or commercial, can be effected without Liberty."

The diversity of languages, as has been pointed out by many, is one of the causes of the lack of unity among the people of India. For that reason Babu Syama Charan was of opinion that "the unity of language and written character is highly desirable for India, as also a uniform code of laws for administration of the provinces throughout India."

About the public debt, he wrote thus :

"A large amount of public debt is prejudicial to the people who thus invest their capital in public securities :

1st—Physically, by rendering them idle and slothful.

2nd—Intellectually, by making them thoughtless and unenterprising.

3rd—Circumstantially, by allowing them to be lonely and retired, and mutilated of their pecuniary means."

As he was fond of liberty, he did not like the dependent condition of India. He observed :

"Dependence (*i. e.*, subjection to a foreign nation) has been the *principal disease* of India and all other evils are mere symptoms of it."

He was keenly alive to the inefficiency of the Police force in India. He, therefore, wrote :

"The inefficiency of the Police should be remedied by the people themselves by providing means for the protection of their lives and properties, for otherwise it is they who suffer and not the Government."

About the cause of failure of good government in India he remarked :

"Owing to prejudice and ignorance, the administration of India has never been just and impartial."

The following may be found interesting and instructive with regard to the present-day Councils and Assemblies :

"Public Assemblies are made interesting in the proportion in which the people assembled are benefited by these either in theory or practice."

About the ruin of Indian trade and manufacture, he was of opinion :

"With a view to encourage and promote the professions, trade and manufactures of England, those of India have been systematically discouraged and diminished."

He also gave suggestions for the improvement of agriculture in the Punjab. He said :

"In order to improve the condition of the Punjab it is highly desirable that ready markets should be provided at all localities for the agricultural produce of the country throughout all the seasons of the year."

About the political importance of the salt and saltpetre monopolies of Bengal, he observed :

"The political importance of the salt and saltpetre monopolies of the Lower Provinces of Bengal was that by their means the Government had an entire control both over land and water, which was most essential in the early days of the British rule."

He also recognized that unemployment is the curse of society and the cause of discontent among its members. He remarked :

"Want of livelihood is a most fruitful source of popular discontent, and is calculated to produce serious events of political significance."

"As regards the best trade in the world, he said :

"Of all the trades of the world, the trade on the article of wisdom is the most respectable, most profitable and most durable. In ancient times religionists monopolised this trade, and in the modern times statesmen and politicians exercise the same paramount influence in the market."

Babu Syama Charan was very anxious for the development and encouragement of Arts and Manufactures in India.

One cause of the scarcity of employment is the gradual deterioration in the arts and crafts among different classes or communities of this country in modern times. It is patent to every sensible man that when there are two individuals of the same profession, one of whom is superior to the other, the inferior man is superseded. If so, we find no difficulty at all to account for the present state of scarcity of employment and livelihood which prevails

in this country. The artisans and artists of this country are as a rule from among the illiterate people ; and as might be expected, such men are guided in secular matters more by their time-honoured customs than by sound reasoning. Hence no innovation can be introduced among them, nay it is rather a hopeless task to induce them to undertake anything in the shape of trade or profession, which their forefathers have not followed or which the other members of their community do not look upon with favour. But this is an evil quite remediable, if proper means are applied and it is for this end, that the following measures were suggested by Babu Syama Charan :

1. "That a Sub-Committee of arts and manufactures be formed.
2. That prizes be awarded to any student of the Government schools who shall produce an approved specimen of art by his own manipulation. The object being to create a taste for manufacture and handicraft among literary men, the reward may be limited at first to the Government scholars, and after a certain time it might be extended to those of private institutions also.

3. To carry out the above, a fund may be raised both by private subscription and grant-in-aid from Government.

Further details of this affair may be arranged by the Sub-Committee for encouragement of arts and manufactures as mentioned above."

He was also one of those enthusiasts who raised the cry of "Back to Nature." He enunciated a scheme for that purpose. He wrote :

"Man cannot attain to that blissful state both physically and intellectually which nature has intended for him and consequently which he is susceptible of, unless he reverts to his original

state of simplicity which consists, first in dress, second in food and third in abode.

(i) As to dress, it may be most clearly proved that the modern system of complicated dress is the result more of vanity than of necessity, for its evils are manifold which it would require volumes to describe fully, but some of them might be shewn here briefly as follows ;

(i) Dress checks the free circulation of the blood by interfering with the perspiration by coming in contact with the skin and thereby stopping the pores through which extraneous matter of the body is removed by co-operation.

(ii) It causes putrefaction of the blood by keeping off fresh air from touching the skin directly.

(iii) Hence it creates a degree of heat which is far in excess of the natural limit, which therefore causes a variety of injuries both to the body and the mind by debilitating the system and making it liable to various accidents which would be otherwise avoided.

II. As to food, the original state appears to be that only vegetable food was used and that in a raw state.

The advantages of a vegetable diet are as follows :

(i) Of vegetable food it may be safely asserted that it keeps the blood in such a wholesome state as not to cause any excitement either to the passion or the body; hence it is well calculated to preserve the health, both of the mind and the body; hence longevity is one of its manifold advantages.

(ii) Raw food is used with more facility than cooked food.

(iii) Time, labour and expense are saved in a greater measure by using raw food than cooked ones.

With regard to food, it may also be asserted that nature intended raw materials for the food of man, *e.g.*, leaves, fruits, grains, water, etc. But man has exceeded these natural and simple assignments quite fancifully and has had recourse to various culinary productions of elaborate character which produce a multitude of evils sufficient to render him completely miserable.



For now his wants are constant and unsatiable ; because what was once found to be enough to satisfy his hunger and give him health and long life, is now scarcely sufficient to keep him contented for a single day : as according to the modern habits of the people, one who has not taken cooked meals, notwithstanding his stomach may be filled up with raw materials such as fruits, etc., is considered to have fasted and have undergone privations which it is the lot of a most destitute person to suffer. Cooked foods, whether curry, sweetmeats, or of any other kinds, stimulate the system and thereby weaken the stomach ; as also vitiate the taste ; so as to render the simplest food unpalatable and unnourishing. This fact is the source of many of the mischiefs.

III. With regard to the local accommodation of human life it may be said with the same degree of force that to live under roofed houses and within closed walls is injurious to the body and mind, inasmuch as the pressure of the surrounding atmosphere is calculated to strengthen the system and by avoiding it the body is rendered as delicate as to be affected by the least vicissitude of the atmosphere, which was originally intended to protect and not to injure the animal system.

It was evidently not the intention of nature that man should build tremendous castles and houses to give him protection from the atmospherical vicissitudes, which, though severely felt at times, are purifying and strengthening to the system and hence affording sound health and longevity. The very care and anxiety for erecting convenient and permanent dwellings are sufficient to corrode the breast of man and render him completely miserable, not to mention other incidental evils."

## CHAPTER V

### *BOYHOOD OF SRIS CHANDRA*

Sris Chandra was a boy of about seven years when his father Babu Syama Charan died. In his lifetime "Master" Syama Charan was known as the "Bara Babu" of Lahore. In his residence was held every day what the people called a "Durbar" or "Court." The sycophants, flatterers, time-servers and all those who had to get some favour or work out of him surrounded him in large numbers every day. As usual with that class of people, they thought they would get their purpose served by paying undue attention to the little children of the master of the house. Sris came to enjoy the lion's share of their attention and nice presents. He used to be gorgeously dressed, moved about in a perambulator or gharry, attended to by servants and the class mentioned above as "sycophants, flatterers and time-servers." Everything contributed to spoil him. He was a very mischief-making child and it was almost impossible to control him.

But the death of his father stunned him. The palatial residence in which he lived and played about, together with many of those things which he had looked upon as his own, had to be sold and he was taken to a small rented house in which he was almost "cribbed, cabined and confined." The change of circumstances exercised a great influence upon his mind. The lively

mischievous boy became dull and morose. But it was his mother who inspired him with noble and soul-elevating thoughts and encouraged him to pursue his studies attentively, which would make him rise superior to his father in earthly riches, worldly honours and learning. Sris was, therefore, always grateful to his beloved mother and worshipped her as a goddess.

After the death of his father, Sris changed his boyish pranks and tricks and applied himself assiduously to study. He was then reading in the Mission School at Lahore, of which his father had been the first Head Master. He was a favourite of Mr. Forman and other teachers of the School. Mr. Shiv Dayal, one of the class fellows of Sris Chandra, thus writes about his friend :

"In 1868, in my seventh year, I joined the Mission School at Lahore in its lowest class. A few days after me a Bengali boy, about a year older, blackish brown in complexion, with small-pox marks on his face, joined the class. He was introduced into it by the Head Master himself, Mr. Guru Das Maitra, one of the famous disciples of Dr. Duff. This unusual interest taken by the Head Master in the Bengali boy was due to the fact that his father, the late Babu Shama Charan Bose, held a high position in the office of the Director of Public Instruction and was well known in educational circles. Sris was very quiet. He rarely played or ran about and was never known to have committed any mischief."

Sris Chandra at that time could not afford to pay the fee of any private tutor. But some of the Bengalis in Lahore used to teach boys *gratis* in their houses. One of these kind gentlemen was Babu Nil Kamal Lahiri, who knew his father well and did what lay in his power

to help Sris in his studies. Babu Nil Kamal was the Record-keeper of the Punjab Chief Court and was regarded as one of the leaders of the Bengali community of Lahore. Rai Barada Kanta Lahiri Bahadur was one of his relations and at his instance took Sris by the hand and taught him English so well that before he reached the Entrance class he had read the works of Shakespeare, Milton and of many other English classical writers.

Rai B. K. Lahiri Bahadur thus writes about him:

"After the death of his father Sirish used to read with me privately when I was in the second or third year of the Government College, Lahore. One of his distant maternal uncles, a very simple and goodnatured man, perfectly innocent of all worldly affairs, used to accompany Sirish when he came to read with me. It was this gentleman who succeeded in alienating that valuable patrimony of the minors for a nominal price to a distinguished friend of the deceased."

Again, he writes :

"When he (Sris) was in the Entrance class, I asked him how he was going on with his studies. He replied that he had hopes of passing in every branch except in English and that he was very weak in that subject. From that time I made it a point to teach him English and he had read with me besides other works, Julius Cæsar, Macbeth, Hamlet and other plays of Shakespeare while he was still in the Entrance class. This gave him ample strength, and he fired off like a shot in all subsequent examinations."

In the Mission School, Lahore, Sris was in the habit of reading the Bible and was leaning towards Christianity. This alarmed his mother and he was removed from the

Mission to the Government School, where he was the recipient of a stipend.

There was some trouble at the time of the Entrance Examination. The Head Master, Mr. J. D. Staines, was not at first inclined to allow him to appear in the Entrance Examination, for Sris had done badly in some of the class examinations, which was due to the fact that he forgot to turn over the pages of the examination papers and thus did not answer the questions printed on the other side. This being explained to Mr. Staines, he did not detain Sris for another year in his class. It should be said to the credit of Sris that he came out successful in the Entrance Examination, standing first in the whole province and third in the Calcutta University and winning a scholarship of Rs. 10 per month.

Mr. Shiv Dayal, Sris Chandra's class-fellow says:

"To be fair, Sirish, no doubt, did not take any great interest in school books but would now and then surprise his class-fellows by showing them some English poetical works, even the name of which they had never heard. We had two societies in the Entrance class; an ordinary Debating Club, and a "Self-improvement Society," which was chiefly confined to the performance of simple scientific experiments. We collected a few dishes, cups and empty bottles and a thermometer. This was in the year 1876, when Science was not taught in any school in the Punjab. Sirish took some interest in the latter."

After passing the Entrance Examination of the Calcutta University, Sris joined the Lahore Government College in 1877. The scholarship he had secured enabled him to carry on his studies. It was during his college career that Sris was attracted to the Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj,

and the Theosophical Society. We make no apology in quoting again from the reminiscences of Mr. Shiv Dayal about the college career of Sris. He writes:

"In January 1877 Sirish and I joined the Government College, Lahore, which had just occupied its new building, then incomplete. The whole college contained about 100 scholars. Dr. G. W. Leitner, a German Jew, but a very learned English scholar, was its Principal. Another German gentleman (Dr. Stupnagel) was Professor of History and Philosophy, and Babu Sashi Bhusan Mukerjee, M. A., B. L., was Professor of Mathematics. A Pandit taught Sanskrit and Maulvi Mohamed Husain Azad, who left his mark as a poet and writer of beautiful vigorous Urdu prose, taught Persian and Arabic. There was no provision for Science. Those students in whom a thirst for this subject had been created attended lectures on Physics and Chemistry in the Lahore Medical School, which was raised to the status of a college many many years after. Seeing that there was a demand for Science, a chair of Natural and Physical Sciences was created and Mr. J. C. Oman was its first occupant. He was transferred from the Accounts to the Education Department. He held no degree, but was a man of wide, varied and deep knowledge. He had the special gift of attracting his pupils to him and for many years Sirish and I with others used to visit his home every Sunday morning. He talked to us freely on such subjects as social, religious and political reform and sowed the seed which developed to a matured growth in many of his pupils. Mrs. Oman was always very kind to us and took great interest in her husband's pupils. Prof. Oman had a large, well assorted and up-to-date library. He was a regular student and lent his books freely to his pupils. In college, he taught us Geology and Zoology, but without any Laboratory.

"In those days the syllabus of studies was stiff and with little choice. In the First Arts Examination every one had to take up English, Mathematics, a classical language, Ancient History, Deductive Logic and Psychology or Inorganic Chemistry.

We were all surprised to see that Sirish Chandra, a Bengali boy, took up Persian and Arabic, instead of Sanskrit and in the University Examination took up Inorganic Chemistry instead of Psychology, which he had studied all along. When the result was out Sirish again topped the list of successful candidates."

The three Professors of the Lahore Government College who most influenced him were Dr. G. W. Leitner, Mr. (afterwards Dr.) J. C. Oman and Muhammad Husain Azad. As Sris Chandra was the only student of Arabic in his time in the Lahore Government College, he attracted the attention of Dr. Leitner, who was himself a great Arabic scholar. He became a great favourite of Dr. Leitner, who took great interest in him, as the son of his old friend, Syama Charan Basu. It was understood that Sris would be recommended for nomination to the Statutory Civil Service as soon as he graduated. The following is the certificate given by Mr. Oman to Sris Chandra :

Government College, Lahore.  
*June 12th 1885.*

Srish Chandra Basu, B.A., studied Chemistry, Physiology, Zoology and Geology with me in the Government College, Lahore, for the F. A. and B. A., Examinations of the Calcutta University and I have much pleasure in stating that he was an exceptionally apt, intelligent and successful student. Sris Chandra won my good opinion not only by the progress he made in his studies, but by his general good conduct in the class. He has been known to me for about seven years and I have always had the highest opinion of his character and abilities.

(Sd.) J. Campbell Oman, F. C. S., F. L. S.,  
*Professor of Natural Science in the  
Govt. College, Lahore.*

In sending this certificate, Prof. Oman wrote to Sris Chandra thus :

Lahore, 12-6-85

My dear Sris,

I was very glad to learn from your letter of the 4th instant that you heartily approve of my scheme for the establishment of a Science Institute and I hope, if you join the Chief Court bar, to have the benefit of your personal assistance in the great work. I have much pleasure in enclosing the certificate you asked for.

I shall bear in mind your offer of books for the Institute Library, but before calling upon you to pay your promised subscription, I have to beg the favour of your opinion in regard to the following matter.

It has been suggested that considering the limited funds likely to be at the disposal of the Institute for some time to come, it should be placed in connection with the Government College (your old *alma mater*) by which arrangement the following distinct advantages would be gained:

- (1) The use of the Science class-room for the ordinary meetings of the members.
- (2) The use of the College Hall for popular evening lectures.
- (3) The use of the Government College apparatus.

On the other hand, the Government College would benefit by the apparatus belonging to the Society, which could, however, be kept as a distinct and separate collection so that it might be removed to other quarters should the necessity or opportunity for so doing ever arise.

I am myself in favour of the suggested arrangement to which of course, the sanction and approval of the Government would have to be obtained.

Kindly let me know, *as soon as possible*, if you would object to pay your subscription to the Institute if the suggested connection with the Government College were carried into effect.

Very truly yours  
J. Campbell Oman."







*SAMADARSHI SABHA*

In the same year the *Samadarshi Sabha* ( समदर्शी सभा ) was also established (1879). Pandit Shiva Narayan Agnihotri was its President. Pandit Agnihotri's influence on Sris Chandra began from his school days. He was Drawing Master in the Lahore District School. On completing his thirty-second year in December 1882, Agnihotri resigned his appointment as Drawing Master in the Lahore High School and took *Sannyasa*. John Campbell Oman has narrated in detail the proceedings of the day of his Sannyasa in his *Indian Life—Religious and Social*, pp. 129-32.

Agnihotri took the name of Swami Satyananda when he became a Sannyasi. The student community of Lahore greatly admired his renunciation of worldly riches and honors and looked upon him as their *beau ideal*. But the favourable impression which he created on the minds of the student community did not last long. Agnihotri lost his first wife in December 1880. Within a year of her death he remarried a Bengali widow. People gave him credit for his courage in doing so. But when his second wife died, he remarried for the third time in 1885 after his having taken Sannyasa two years previously. He had also three children by his first wife. So people were of opinion that he should not have remarried after taking Sannyasa. He fell in their estimation.

He afterwards founded the *Deva Samaj* and came to be known as Deva Guru Bhagwan. About Sris Chandra, Deva Guru Bhagwan said in a letter dated 26th April, 1926 :

"I knew late Rai Bahadur Babu Sris Chandra Basu when he was a student in Government High School of Lahore and I was a teacher there. He was a very intelligent and diligent boy. He was of a quiet and good nature. He was very respectful to me and to other teachers. He used to attend my meetings, which I used to hold in those days for the good of young men. He was under my influence for some years and was able to assimilate it more or less to his and his countrymen's advantage. Under my influence he became conscious of many evils prevalent among Hindus and had developed a sense of honesty and a feeling to serve his country in one way or another."

About Pandit Agnihotri, Mr. Shiva Dayal writes :

"In the seventies and eighties Pandit Shiv Narain Agnihotri (now Dev Guru Bhagwan and founder of the Dev Samaj) was held in very high estimation. His eloquent lectures on religious and social subjects went to the very heart of his audience and were universally applauded. He was Drawing Master in the Government School, Lahore, and thus had a special attraction for his pupils. In his house and under his presidency was held a club, membership of which was confined to about a dozen budding young men, all college students, and most of them rose to high positions in after-life. Papers were read there on subjects previously fixed, discussed freely and the president wound up the debate by his learned remarks. I gratefully remember those happy meetings. Sris always took a leading part here."

There was another movement, with which Sris Chandra was associated. It was the Arya Samaj movement of Dayananda Saraswati. Thus writes Mr. Shiv Dayal :

"In the same year (1877) Swami Dayananda Saraswati paid his first visit to Lahore, gave a series of lectures which created commotion in the student community, and most of us regularly attended his lectures. Sris's genius now began to show itself. He studied books on religious and scientific subjects and took an active part in the debates which became common in those days

and especially the weekly meetings which were then held in the Brahmo Samaj. Prof. Oman encouraged Sris in these pursuits. He used to amuse us by Mesmeric performances, and invoking spirits through a three-legged round table or the planchette."

With the Arya Samaj, came the Theosophical Society. We quote from the same writer :

"Col. Olcott and Madame Blavatsky visited Lahore in those years and established a close relationship between Theosophy and the Arya Samaj. Thus many a young man was attracted to study the works of the gifted Russian lady and specially her well-known voluminous work 'Isis Unveiled.' Sirish was one of them."

Sris Chandra in his after-life became a staunch follower of Theosophy.

#### *KANPHATA YOGI*

In this connection mention may be made of Kanphata Yogi Sivanatha. There was a temple not far from the house in Lahore where Sris lived, in charge of a yogi, who had both his ears bored and with circular rings in them. He belonged to the sect of Guru Gorakhnath. He was learned in Sanskrit, Hindi and Panjabi and used to deliver discourses on religious subjects to the people who used to assemble almost daily in the temple. Sris was also a very frequent visitor there. He owed much of his knowledge of Hinduism and the rites and ceremonies of Guru Gorakhnath's sect to this ascetic, whom he always held in great reverence.

#### *INFLUENCES ON SRIS CHANDRA*

Sris had received his early education in the Mission School in Lahore, studied Urdu, Persian and Arabic,

frequented the Hindu temple mentioned above, joined the Brahmo Samaj and the Theosophical Society and saw the establishment of the Arya Samaj at Lahore, which he did not join for his scruples regarding the infallibility of the Vedas, but worked with the members of the Samaj. His character was moulded by all these influences in his early life at Lahore, and when he left the Punjab for good in 1883 at the age of twenty-two, he had his interest quickened in the comparative study of religion, which never left him till his last day.

It was at this time that Sris commenced the study of the sacred books of the Hindus. He studied the translation of the Upanishads in English by Raja Rammohun Roy and Roer and also in Bengali as available in the *Tattvabodhini Patrika*. He was so much taken up with the study of religious literature, that he neglected his college studies. Many thought that he would not be successful in the University Examinations. But he achieved brilliant success in both the F. A. and B. A. Examinations.

As has been pointed out before, Sris entered the Lahore Government College in 1877. He was awarded a scholarship of Rupees sixteen a month. He studied Arabic and took it as his second language in the First Arts Examination held in December, 1878. He surprised his class-fellows by passing the F. A. Examination in the First Division and stood seventh in the University in order of merit. This time also he was granted a scholarship of Rupees Thirty-five a month.

Sris continued his studies for the B. A. degree in the

same college. Let us see what his class-fellow Mr. Shiv Dayal says:

“In the B. A. class Sirish and I took up the Science course, which brought us into closest touch with Prof. Oman, whom we worshipped as our Guru. He taught us Chemistry, Zoology, Geography, Physical Geography and Physiology and without any apparatus to begin with. Sirish, Sundar Das Suri and I took special pleasure in unpacking the first consignment of Science Apparatus and spent a greater part of the summer holidays in the year 1879 in this labour of love.

“In his spare moments Sirish Chandra picked up Shorthand. He reported one of the orations of Babu Surendra Nath Banerjee, wrote it out in long hand and took it to Babu Surendra Nath, who was pleased with the performance. I was present on this occasion. This art was of great help to my friend in after-life.”

It should be said to the credit of Sris Chandra that not only was he a master of Shorthand, but invented a Hindi shorthand system also.

#### *SRIS CHANDRA ATTENDS THE MEDICAL COLLEGE*

In 1877, when Sris, after passing the Entrance Examination, joined the Government College at Lahore, there was no Professor of Science at that institution. The only place where some Sciences were taught was the Medical College there. So Sris Chandra attended the lectures on Chemistry, Physics, Physiology and Botany and the dissecting room to learn Practical Anatomy. He would have joined the Medical College had he been awarded the same scholarship there which he was entitled to in the Government College. After passing the F. A. Examination he again thought of studying medicine, but again, he could not forsake the scholarship that was

offered to him for standing first in that examination in the province of the Punjab. The prospects in the medical service in that province were not tempting and the Western system of medicine was not appreciated in the Punjab and so there were no independent practitioners of that school there. But he was so much fascinated with Science, for which Herbert Spencer's Essay—"What knowledge is of most worth"—was to not a little extent responsible, that he took up the study of Natural Philosophy, Biology and Geology in right earnest. He fitted up a small laboratory in his house, where he performed some experiments in Physics and Chemistry.

If he himself did not study medicine, he advised his brother to do so. He also sent his brother to England to complete his medical studies there.

#### *THEORY OF EVOLUTION*

When Sris Chandra was a student in the Lahore Government College, the Darwinian Theory of Evolution was not more than a couple of decades old. He was so fascinated with this theory, that he not only read Darwin's works, but other literature on the subject in English, which at that time was not an extensive one. He read the works of Herbert Spencer and Huxley to grasp and understand that theory thoroughly.

After passing the B. A. Examination, early in 1881, he delivered a lecture in Hindi in the Arya Samaj premises on "Evolution." It was perhaps for the first time that the Lahore public heard the Theory expounded in their native language. The lecture created a great sensation in the



town. In some quarters, it was very adversely criticised and Sris was called the descendant of a monkey!

His interest in this Theory was so great, that when the *Arya* of Lahore made its appearance in 1882, the very first number contained his paper on the *Theory of Evolution from an Aryan point of view*. It was noticed by Madame Blavatsky in *The Theosophist* for March 1882:

The first number contains some very interesting information; among other matter, a learned and comprehensive article, "The Theory of Evolution from an Aryan Point of View" by one F. T. S. If the initials mean "Fellow, Theosophical Society", then the latter ought to feel doubly proud; first, of the member who wrote it; and then of the laudable feeling of modesty which made him conceal a name of which, as a writer, he need never be ashamed. The article is so good, that we hope it will be continued. (*The Theosophist*, April 1882, page 181, under caption New Magazines).

The second issue of the *Arya* also contained a continuation of this important article. "Gravitation and Levitation" also bearing on Evolution was contributed by him to the *Arya* for 1882.

Sris Chandra possessed imagination or "scientific imagination" in abundance. He greatly regretted in after-life that he had no facilities to pursue science, which was so congenial to him.

#### HIS CLASS-FELLOWS IN THE COLLEGE

It is interesting to note that a proportionately large number of those who joined Sris Chandra in the students' rebellion, to be described in the next chapter, attained to distinction in Government service. Bhawani Das Batra, Kedar Nath, Umrao Singh, Sundar Das Suri and Shiva

Dayal, after leaving the Lahore Government College in 1881, joined the Training College which was then established in Lahore and belonged to the first batch of Licensed Teachers turned out by that institution.

Bhawani Das Batra was appointed Extra Assistant Commissioner, and for his meritorious services was made a Rai Bahadur. His services were for some years lent to the Kashmir State, where he officiated as Revenue Minister. He was a Hindu of the orthodox type, read and re-read the *Mahabharata*, the *Gita* and the *Puranas*. Enamoured of the Sanskrit literature he translated Weber's History of Sanskrit Literature into Hindi. He died in 1916.

Kedar Nath, who is still alive, a member of the Agarwal caste of Banias of Delhi and of very humble parentage, received education by obtaining a scholarship in the Lahore College. He also served in the Punjab Executive Service, and following the example of the members of his caste, made the plainest living possible his *forte*, and after saving money, has established a college at Delhi and named it after his father Ramjas.

Umrao Singh, Sundar Das Suri and Shiv Dayal served in the Educational Department of the Punjab, and rose to the grade of Inspector of Schools. Two of the first named were created Rai Bahadur. So including Sris Chandra himself, there were four Rai Bahadurs in his batch.

#### HOW SRIS PICKED UP SHORTHAND

Pandit Girdhar Lal Pandya was a Gujrati, Nagar-Brahman and belonged to the same caste as the late Sir Sundar Lal, to whom also he was related by marriage. He was Sris Chandra's class fellow in the Lahore District

School and, passing the Entrance Examination, joined him in the Lahore Government College and appeared with him in the First Arts Examination held in December, 1878, but unfortunately he was not successful in that examination. They were very close friends for many years. Girdhar Lal's eldest brother, Pandit Basant Ram Pandya, had travelled almost all over India in the seventies and was a member of the Brahmo Samaj and knew the Bengali language. He saw Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar in Calcutta and was such a great admirer of that unique scholar and social reformer that he named his son after him, who is now in Madras, well-known as manager of a well-known Indian Bank and Member of the Legislative Assembly. He was a man of great refinement and many accomplishments and held an important office in the Sind Punjab and Delhi Railway, now called the North-Western Railway.

Amongst his other accomplishments was his knowledge of Pitman's system of Shorthand. He was a great bibliomaniac and possessed a very decent library. As Sris Chandra was fond of reading, he often frequented Basant Ram's house and borrowed books from his library. There he saw Pitman's publications on Shorthand, which excited his curiosity so much that he determined to learn it.

After passing the First Arts Examination he devoted much of his time to learning Pitman's system of Shorthand and soon acquired such a proficiency in it that he successfully reported the speech of Surendra Nath Banerji, who was on a second visit to Lahore on a political propaganda in the Christmas week of 1879.

As he had gained this proficiency in Shorthand, he could report the judgments of the several Judges of the Allahabad High Court and subsequently was appointed the Judgment writer of that Court. He also successfully reported the speeches of Mrs. Annie Besant.

*THE HOUSE THEY LIVED IN*

After the death of Babu Syama Charan, the rented house occupied by his family was a small one, but not an insanitary one. Here they lived from 1868 to 1874. There was no Bengali resident in its vicinity. This was considered a drawback, for the children, not accustomed to hear Bengali speech outside the house, were becoming more and more un-Bengali in their speech and manners.

So in the middle of 1874 they removed to another house, somewhat larger, the next-door neighbour of which was Babu Banwari Lal Bose, an official of the Railway Department on a salary of Rupees two hundred a month, which the Christian Anglo-Indians of those days considered a "princely income for a native!" He had a nephew who was Sris's class-fellow in the school. Both of them played and studied together. Banwari Babu set apart a large room in the house for the study of his nephew and Sris Chandra. Here Sris Chandra played the school-master to many school boys, including some of his class-fellows.

In this lane there was a temple in charge of which was the Kanphata Yogi Shivanath, whom Sris Chandra used to visit frequently.

The position of this house was a very advantageous one to Sris Chandra. It was closer to the Government District

High School, to which he was now removed, than the house vacated. Babu Nilkamal Lahiri and Rai Barada Kanta Lahiri Bahadur were also living close by, so also did two of the teachers of the school—Babu Kashi Prasad Chatterji, who was the third master in the school and the Muhammadan Moulvi, who taught Sris Chandra Persian and Arabic. It was from this house that Sris Chandra passed the Entrance Examination of the Calcutta University and the Punjab University College. In the former Examination Sris stood third in the University and first in the Province of Punjab, but in the latter he stood 11th in order of merit, Sirdar Gurdayal Singh Man standing first. This was a great surprise to Sris Chandra's teachers and friends. Both the examinations used to be held within a few days of one another, but the Examination results of the Punjab University College were published a long time after those of the Calcutta University. Dr. Leitner moved heaven and earth to raise the Punjab University College to the status of a University. It was suspected, nay, openly said in those days that Dr. Leitner manipulated examination results of his pet institution in such a manner that the people were made to think that the University College examinations were more stiff than the corresponding ones of the Calcutta University. The Journal of the Anjuman-i-Punjab wrote that the University College examinations were so superior to those of the Calcutta University that Sris who passed the Entrance Examination with such distinction had to cut a sorry figure in the corresponding examination of the Punjab University College, by standing 11th in it!

Gurdial Sing Man, who headed the list of the successful candidates in the University College Examination, was appointed a Statutory civilian, but being notoriously corrupt was dismissed from the service.

## CHAPTER VI.

### *THE STUDENTS' REBELLION—THE BIRTH OF "THE TRIBUNE"—SRISH CHANDRA'S OTHER ACTIVITIES*

During the college career of Sris Chandra there occurred what is well-known in the history of the Punjab—the *Students' Rebellion*. It was the first of its kind in that part of the country. Sris Chandra played an important part in that "Students Rebellion," and he had also to suffer for the part played by him during that strike. It showed the metal of which he was made. His character shone forth during those troubles times. He had to pay the penalty, yet he stood brave and fearless.

While Sris Chandra was reading in the fourth year of the Government College, Dr. Leitner, the Principal, forgot himself so far in his class that he kicked one of the students. This led to a strike of the students which was unprecedented in its nature in India. Sris Chandra was considered the ring-leader and had to suffer the forfeiture of his scholarship for three months.

Mr. Shiv Dayal thus speaks of this strike :

"In the latter part of our fourth year, a lamentable incident took place. Dr. Leitner had previously set a subject for essay-writing which most of us forgot to do on account of some misunderstanding. He lost his temper, rebuked the whole class and when the period was over and we left his room, he caught hold of the quietest student (now L. Sri Ram, M.A.), shut the doors, gave him some kicks, and left the college by the back door. The

class assembled in the college hall, thence walked to the room of Babu Sashi Bhushan, told him what had taken place, refused to take his notes and walked out of the college to the Gol Bagh. There we assembled, with our youthful minds full of indignation, and a document in which we expressed our determination to suppress tyranny and highhandedness was written and every one present signed it. The writer of this note was the writer of that document, which was probably dictated by Sris Chandra. With two exceptions the whole class remained firm and did not attend the college for many days. Sris's house was our rendezvous. Here we matured our plans under the guidance of some of our Professors and active advice of men like the late Rai Bahadur Babu Chandra Nath Mitter, Rai Bahadur Master Pearay Lal, Dr. Suraj Lal, Babu Jogendra Chandra Bose and Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia. It was in these troublous days that my class-fellows learnt their first lesson of freedom, and public men felt the necessity of a strong English Indian organ at Lahore, and through the advice and exertions of Babu Jogendra Chandra Bose and Surendra Nath Banerji (who, in those days, frequently visited and thrilled the Lahore audiences by his elocution), the Sardar made up his mind to start *The Tribune*, which was born in February 1881. Thus my class, Sris notably amongst them, had a great share in giving the Punjab 'this champion of its rights.' Sris Chandra was the first assistant editor."

The following is the application submitted by the students of the Government College, during the students' rebellion as referred to in the reminiscences of Mr. Shiv Dayal :

"To

The Principal,  
Government College,  
Lahore.

Sir,

With reference to your notice of the 16th instant, we, the undersigned students of the 4th year class, beg to state with



extreme sorrow and regret that our class has been subjected to harsh treatment.

The violence, offered to Sri Ram on the 15th instant, while he was still very weak on account of his late illness, was such as to produce serious bodily injury : we are all afraid of being subjected to the same treatment. This made us leave the college premises at once. We are prepared to attend the college on receiving an assurance that we shall not be put to such ill-treatment in future.

We venture to state that unprovoked personal violence is out of place in a college building, and is unbecoming on the part of a learned man like yourself.

We beg to remain,  
Sir,  
Your most obedient pupils...."

Now, what was the result of this strike? Mr. Shiv Dayal proceeds to say :

"Our memorial to the higher authorities was not in vain. Dr. Lietner got a snubbing. Poor Sri Ram was rusticated for a year and the rest of us rejoined the college, but Dr. Lietner had not the courage to show his face before 'the rebel class'."

About his class friends, Mr. Shiv Dayal writes :

"Besides the writer of this note the following are some of his old class-fellows and thick friends :

1. Rai Bahadur Sunder Das Suri, M. A., Retired Inspector of Schools.

2. Rai Bahadur Bhawani Das, M. A., who rose to a high position in the Provincial Civil Service and died a few years ago.

3. Rai Sahib Kedar Nath, M. A., Retired District Judge and founder of Ramjas College and School, Delhi.

Sirish belonged to this batch of good men. He influenced them and was influenced by them."

Rai Bahadur Lala Mulraj, M. A., P. R. S., the brother of

the unfortunate Sri Ram, thus writes about the students' rebellion :

"I was at Gujranwala acting as Extra Assistant Commissioner in the summer of 1880, when Dr. Leitner forgot himself and cuffed and kicked my brother L. Sri Ram in the class. He was in the 4th year class then. The whole class (or very nearly the whole class) took this as a personal affront and left the college. After some days my brother was expelled from the college and the other students were allowed to attend the college. I have no memory of the letter which you say Rai Bahadur Kristo Das Pal wrote to me on the subject."

About the class-fellows of Sris Chandra, Mr. Mulraj writes :

"The class-fellows of your brother (Sris Chandra) were :

- (1) my brother—Lala Sri Ram, M. A.
- (2) Rai Bahadur Bhavani Das, M. A.
- (3) Lala Shiv Dayal, M. A.
- (4) Rai Bahadur Sundar Das Suri, M. A.
- (5) Rai Sahib Kedar Nath, M. A.
- (6) Rai Bahadur Umrao Singh, M. A.

It was a class of brilliant students. My brother L. Sri Ram is dead. He died at Simla on 10th September, 1925. Rai Bahadur Bhawani Das died some years ago. Lala Shiv Dayal (Retired Inspector of Schools) is now working as a Manager (?) in a Factory of Lala Harkishen Lal in Lucknow or some other town in U. P. Rai Bahadur Sunder Das (Retired Inspector of Schools) is at Lahore. Rai Sahib Kedar Nath (Retired District Judge) is now living at Delhi. He has founded the Ramjas College and Ramjas School. Shekh Umar Baksh is at Lahore. I do not remember whether there were any other class-fellows of your brother and whether any of them is living."

#### BIRTH OF "THE TRIBUNE"

The birth of *The Tribune* is connected with the students' rebellion in the Punjab. It is necessary here

to narrate the history of its origin. *The Tribune* made its appearance from February, 1881. When the students' rebellion took place in June, 1880, there was not a single newspaper in that Province conducted in English by Indians; and hence the Indian cause suffered for there not being any organ to express their opinions or grievances. Sris Chandra felt it at that time very keenly. Sirdar Dyal Singh Majithia was an enlightened, wealthy and public-spirited nobleman in the Punjab. He was a son of Sardar Lena Singh, who was a minister of the Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Dyal Singh had travelled in Europe, which was an uncommon thing for a Punjabi of rank and influence in the seventies of the last century. These travels widened his mental horizon. Sris and some of his class-fellows went to Amritsar, where he lived, sometime in July 1880 to represent to him the necessity of establishing an Indo-English paper in the Punjab. Sardar Dyal Singh favourably considered the proposal and advanced money to Surendra Nath Banerji.\*

Babu Sitala Kanta Chatterjee—a brother of Dr. Nisi Kanta Chatterjee, a well-known Bengali traveller—was brought from Bengal to conduct the paper, of which a prospectus was issued and the name at first proposed was *The Sikh*, but afterwards it appeared under the name of *The Tribune*. It was at first a weekly journal and made its appearance from the first week of February, 1881. Sris Chandra joined its editorial staff and thus made the acquaintance of Sitala Kanta. He was on the staff of *The Tribune* while a student in the Training College and left

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\* See—Banerji's *A Nation in Making*, p. 47.

it on passing out of it and being appointed a teacher in the Government High School, Lahore.

*PASSING OF THE B. A. EXAMINATION*

On account of the students' rebellion Sris Chandra could not study well for several months. He appeared in the B. A. Examination held in January, 1881, and passed in the first division. In those days there were two examination centres for the B. A. Examination of the Calcutta University, namely, Calcutta and Agra. So he had to go to Agra. Pandit (afterwards Sir) Sundar Lal had failed in the previous year and sat in the examination hall with him, but passed in the second division.

After passing the B. A. Examination, Sris Chandra was not allowed to study for the M. A. Examination in the Lahore Government College. But in 1881, there was established the Training College at Lahore under the Principalship of Mr. R. Dick. It was the first college of its kind in India. Sris Chandra joined this Training College.

Mr. Shiv Dayal thus goes on to say:

"The whole fourth year class appeared in the B. A. Examination of the Calcutta University in January, 1881. In the same year the Central Training College was opened and Prof. Dick was its Principal. All of us joined this institution in a body. The course extended to a year and a half and did not require any great industry or attention and so this was an opportunity for Sirish and others to extend their general studies and take greater interest in public affairs. Sirish was now well-known as a silent thinker, a good debator, but not an eloquent speaker. It was in these days that his first work entitled "*A Treatise on Yoga Philosophy*" came out. (This was published in 1880

when Sirish was in the Fourth Year class). After the final examination of the Training College, Sirish was appointed the Head Master of the Model School, which was then started to serve as a Practising School for the College and was up to the Middle grade. Here Sirish published his second work on *Physical Geography* (in Urdu) and his attention was attracted to legal studies."

The year 1881 was not propitious to him. During the year there were two bereavements amongst the members of his household. But these misfortunes did not damp his ardour for serving the public.

#### SABHAPATY SWAMI

In December 1879 Sabhapaty Swami visited Lahore and delivered lectures on *Yoga* there. Sris Chandra was then a student in the B. A. class and in his nineteenth year. The lectures created such an interest in him for *Yoga* that he frequently saw Sabhapaty Swami and undertook to publish his lectures in book form. Sabhapaty had a very poor knowledge of English. So Sris Chandra rewrote and edited what the Madras Swami had written and, adding a poem of his entitled, "*The Yogi's Address to his Countrymen*," published it in book form in 1880. A treatise on "Vedantic Raj Yoga Philosophy" by the Gianee Guroo Yogi Sabhapaty Swami, edited by Sris Chandra Basu, is referred to in J. C. Oman's "*Indian Life—Religious and Social*," (p. 32) and extracts also made therefrom. He also wrote a biographical sketch of Sabhapaty as narrated by him to Sris Chandra. The publication created a great sensation in India and foreign countries also. Three editions were published in five or six years and it was also translated into Bengali and published from Calcutta.

John Campbell Oman drew largely from this publication in the first chapter of his work on *Indian Life—Religious and Social*. That chapter treats of the “Yogis, Mahatmas and the Sages of India” (see pages 30-32).

In his *Six Schools of Hindu Philosophy* Professor Max Müller has also referred to this work of Sris Chandra.

Letters from several parts of India and foreign countries were addressed to Sris Chandra regarding *Yoga* and other “miracles” said to have been performed by Sabhapaty Swami.

When the Partition of Bengal took place in September 1905, Babu Narendra Nath Sen, the Editor of the *Indian Mirror*, and a well-known member of the Theosophical Society, sided with those who advocated Swadeshi and boycott of British goods. He reproduced the *Yogi’s Address to his Countrymen*, composed by Sris Chandra, in the columns of the *Indian Mirror* and said that these verses deserved to be written in letters of gold.

JOHN CAMPBELL OMAN

We have already referred to John Campbell Oman, who was either an Eurasian or Domiciled European. He received his education in the La Martiniere Institution of Calcutta. He was at first employed in the Accounts Department, from where he proceeded to England and studied Science there. He was appointed to the Lahore Government College as Professor of Science. It is, however, a fact that Oman did not write any scientific work, but became well-known in literary circles by

his works on (1) *Brahmans, Theists and Musalmans of India*, (2) *Indian Life—Religious and Social*, (3) *Realities of Indian Life*, (4) *The Mystics, Saints and Ascetics of India*, etc., etc.

#### JOURNAL OF ANJUMAN-I-PUNJAB

With the birth of *The Tribune* in the Punjab, there came another paper into existence, namely, the *Journal of the Anjuman-i-Punjab*. With the latter was connected Babu Nabin Chandra Rai, who came to the Punjab in the middle of the fifties. He was looked upon as one of the leaders of the Bengali community of Lahore. He was a contemporary of Babu Syama Charan and worked with him in all those "movements which reflected credit on the" Punjab in the sixties. He founded the Brahmo Samaj at Lahore and was instrumental in raising funds to construct its building. He was employed in one of the Government offices in Lahore, from where he was transferred to Agra, where he served for several years. In conjunction with Babus Nilmani Dhar, pleader, and Abinash Chandra Banerji, Munsif of that place, he established a branch of the Brahmo Samaj there, which is now defunct. Retiring from service, he returned to Lahore in 1881. He joined Dr. Leitner, whose "unflinching supporter" he was, in editing the English edition of the *Journal of the Anjuman-i-Punjab*, and as Assistant Registrar of the Punjab University College. Dr. Leitner was very unpopular with the educated people of the Punjab, for he wanted to orientalize education in that province. So was Nabin Babu for his supporting Dr.

Leitner, when *The Tribune* was started in February, 1881. Dr. Leitner also commenced the publication of the English edition of the *Journal of the Anjuman-i-Punjab* and put Nabin Babu in its editorial charge. The object of this journal was to criticize *The Tribune* and to persuade people to support Dr. Leitner in all his measures regarding the Punjab University movement. Sris Chandra was opposed to that movement and agitated against it. So he could not see eye to eye with Nabin Babu in his attempt to orientalize education in the Punjab. But Sris worked with him in the Brahmo Samaj, in the Hindi-Urdu controversy, in spiritualism, and also in other literary activities and social reform movements.

Nabin Babu left the Punjab for good in 1886, because Dr. Leitner was compelled to leave him, and through the influence of Sir Lepel Griffin, the then Governor-General's Agent in Central India, was appointed Naib Dewan of Rutlam State, where he died in 1890.

#### THE PUNJAB UNIVERSITY MOVEMENT\*

As said in a previous chapter, the idea of the Punjab University originated in a suggestion of Babu Syama

\* The Indian Association of Lahore, in or about August 1881, submitted a memorial to the Secretary of State for India which concluded as follows :

"Wherefore, your memorialists humbly pray that the Punjab University College be not raised to the status of a University, that the connection of the schools and colleges of the Punjab with the University of Calcutta may be maintained as heretofore, that the Government scholarships, prizes, medals and honours be awarded according to the results of the Calcutta University



Charan, the father of Sris Chandra. After his death, Dr. Leitner wanted to make it a purely Oriental University. This step was no doubt a retrograde one. Sris Chandra felt that he owed it to the memory of his father to save the Punjab from the calamity of orientalizing its education. So he wrote in *The Tribune*, influenced the vernacular Press to write, and spoke in public against what was known as the Punjab University movement. There were others also who were against that movement. But it was he who greatly influenced the Punjab to strongly agitate against the Punjab University being made a purely Oriental concern. It is problematic whether the agitation would have succeeded had not Sir Charles Umpherston Aitchison been appointed Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab in 1882, who was not in favour of orientalizing education in his satrapy.

#### HINDU-URDU CONTROVERSY

When the Education Commission was appointed by Lord Ripon in 1882, an agitation was set on foot in the Punjab principally by Babu Nabin Chandra Rai, Pandit Shiv Narain Agnihotri and Rai Bahadur Lala Mulraj, M.A., P.R.S., and others, to make Hindi the medium of instruction in the schools of that province instead of Urdu. Sris Chandra also joined this agitation and wrote and spoke showing

Examinations; that no hindrance be thrown in the way of students desirous of going up for the Calcutta University Examinations; that the examining function of the Punjab University College be confined to Oriental languages and Oriental subjects; and that education be more largely imparted through the medium of the English language."

the superiority of Hindi over Urdu. But his appointment in the Government High School prevented him from devoting more time to this agitation.

Rai Bahadur Mul Raj thus writes in a letter (15. 1. 26) to Major B. D. Basu :

"I went to Simla in the summer of 1882 to give evidence before the Hunter Commission. I have a hazy memory that your brother was a strong supporter of Hindi and wrote on the subject on that occasion."

"THE REGENERATOR OF ARYAVARTA"

The Arya Samaj was making rapid progress in the Punjab from the establishment of the first Samaj at Lahore in 1877. It was necessary to have an organ of its own. The *Arya* was started as a monthly journal in 1882. But this was not considered sufficient to meet the want of the Arya Samajists. So one zealous Arya Samajist, named Lala Salig Ram, proprietor of the Arya Press, conceived the idea of starting a weekly to represent the cause of the Arya Samaj. It was started in the beginning of 1883. It was a sheet of royal octavo size and priced so low as half an anna. A few enthusiastic youths, mostly students of the Government College, such as Gurudatt Vidyarthi, Hans Raj and Sangam Lal, edited it. But as they could not manage it for more than a few months, Mr. R. C. Bary, who owned and edited the monthly *Arya*, was appointed its editor. And as Mr. Bary could not do without Sris Chandra, he asked Sris to help him with literary contributions. A few of his writings appeared over his name, but most of them were anonymous.

Mr. Ajudhia Prasad, President of the Ferozpur Arya Samaj, had written an article on 'ocultism' in the *Regenerator* of 1884, and Sris Chandra criticised him in one of his articles. Ajudhia Prasad sent a reply, which was a very tame affair. Sris's rejoinder appeared in the *Regenerator* of 1884, which could not be answered by Ajudhia Prasad. So the controversy ended there.

In the summer of 1884, Surendra Nath Banerji visited the Punjab to raise the National Fund. He went to Rawalpindi and delivered lectures there, which the 'colorless' foreign Christians did not like. One of them, a drunkard and a loafer, happened to edit a paper named *The Punjab Times*. It was the property of a Punjabi, who committed a great mistake in appointing a foreign Christian loafer. This man tried to create bad blood between the Bengalis and the Punjabis by abusing the former to his heart's content. Of course, the agitation against the Ilbert Bill by the Christian Anglo-Indians mainly consisted in abuse of the Bengalis. And since that agitation the Babu-phobia afflicted the foreign Christians in India and its symptoms were very acute in 1884.

Some notice was to be taken of the rabid writings of *The Punjab Times*. Sris wrote an editorial note under the heading of "The wolf in the sheep's skin":

"Some of the readers of our Rawalpindi contemporary, *The Punjab Times*, have been astonished at its being suddenly metamorphosed into a Bengali-phobist. Its brainless and scurrilous attacks on Babu Surendra Nath Banerjee, and the Bengalees in general, in its issues of the 24th and the 31st ultimo, have excited the indignation of all right-thinking and true sons of the Punjab. As a result of its not only irrational but impolitic action, we learn

from its issue of the 31st May, that it has been discontinued by many of its subscribers, and many more are going to follow that example. We, Punjabees, cannot better show our sense of disapprobation of the above otherwise than by this summary process. It is useless for our contemporary to complain now of his being *boycotted*, for this is but the just punishment of its indiscretion and folly. If we, Punjabees, have discontinued to subscribe *The Punjab Times*, it is but to show that it no longer represents our views and interests. It has betrayed our interests, and is a traitor to the true cause of our country. It has tried to foment disunion between us and our countrymen of Bengal by representing the latter as "aliens" and "foreigners." And by so doing it has falsified its claim to be regarded as an organ of the Punjabees. Let us assure our contemporary that the Punjabees do not consider the Bengalees as "foreigners" or "aliens" and that under the all-shadowing aegis of the British rule and enlightening influence of English education, we have learned to disregard our petty provincial differences, and are slowly feeling the thrill of a new and glorious life—the life of Indian Nationality. We are steadily coalescing into a homogeneous nation, having unity of interests, political as well as social. The day is not distant when provincial designations of Bengalees, Punjabees and Madrasees, etc. will be swept away into the limbo of oblivion, and we shall be proud of the name of Arya,—the sons of glorious Aryabarta. The duty of every true patriot ought to be to exert his utmost to bring about this unification, and we cannot find words strong enough to condemn the silly and ill-judged action of the conductors of *The Punjab Times* in thus insidiously trying to inject the slow poison of disunion by crying down a well-meaning and patriotic class of our countrymen—the Bengalees. Let us not give any occasion of congratulations to our enemies, for our disunion is their strength. But how are we to explain this sudden change in the tone of *The Punjab Times*? The explanation is not far to seek. Though the proprietor of the paper is a Punjabee, its new editor is an Anglo-Indian, and it is his own personal feeling, embittered by the memories of the Ilbert Bill controversy, that

have been thus aired in the above journal under the false mask of "we Panjabees." "The wish was father to the thought" might be well applied to this sapient editor, for it is rather what he wishes the Punjabees to think than what a Punjabee really thinks. As a matter of fact, however, we Punjabees wish that the Anglo-Indians of the above type should relieve India of their sublime presence, and 'find some pastures new' in Australia or some such other congenial clime. They are the real 'aliens' and 'foreigners' and being mere birds of passage in India are fattening on our own vitals."

(*The Regenerator of Aryavarta*—Editorial notes—June 9, 1884 page 7).

This had its desired effect. The "colorless" foreign Christian editor of *The Punjab Times* was not virulent in his reply, but merely said that there could be no Indian unity, because India was not one country and its inhabitants not one homogeneous people. He compared India to Europe and its different races to the different nationalities of that continent. In the *Regenerator* of June 1884, Sris gave a strong reply to the arguments advanced by the editor of *The Punjab Times* :

#### "THE PUNJAB TIMES" AND OURSELVES

We thank the editor for the notice he has taken of our humble selves ; but he will be sorry to hear that his arguments have not changed our opinion at all. The comparison between Europe and India is somewhat far-fetched and not to the point. Europe has not one Central Government and therefore it is not one country ; while India under the British Government is one country. The proper parallel to India is the United States of America, which in the extent of its area is equal to India, but still forms one country and one Government.

(*The Regenerator of Aryavarta*, June 23, 1884, page 6).

Times out of number Sris spoke of the future government of India as the United States of India with one Central Government. The United States of India was his dream and time may realise it.

*SWAMI DAYANANDA SARASWATI*

We have already referred to the influence exercised by Swami Dayananda in the Punjab. Swami Dayananda Saraswati visited Lahore for the first time in 1877 and delivered his lecture on the Arya Samaj in June there. Sris attended the lecture, which created great excitement in the orthodox community of that town. He had just a few months before passed the Entrance Examination, and was studying in the first year class of the college and was only seventeen years old. The Swami was a fluent and powerful speaker. He produced such an impression on his mind that he became a frequent visitor to him and discussed religious subjects with him. When Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky wrote to the Swami that they would come to India to learn the Vedic lore at his feet, their letters were very often interpreted to the Swami—for the Swami was ignorant of English—by Sris, who, it is not improbable, had some hand in drafting their replies.

This contact with Swami Dayananda determined Sris to study the Vedas in the original, for which purpose he commenced the study of Sanskrit. Sris worked with the Arya Samaj, but he could not bring himself to believe in the infallibility of the Vedas or their being revealed books. In November 1882, on the occasion of the anniversary of the Lahore Arya Samaj, he was asked to become a

member of that Samaj. He consented to do so, but on condition that he would not sign the pledge that he believed in the infallibility of the Vedas. This belief in the infallibility of the Vedas, as advanced in the *Arya* of February 1883, called forth a rejoinder from Mr. A. O. Hume under the heading "No revelation infallible," published in the *Theosophist* for March, 1883.

When Swami Dayananda died in October, 1883, a great mass meeting was held in the premises of the Arya Samaj, when Lala Lajpat Rai showed himself as the coming leader of the Samaj by reading a written paper on the life and teachings of the Swami. A poem composed in English by Sris Chandra on his death was also read and it was subsequently published in the *Arya* for November, 1883.

Sris Chandra was indebted to Swami Dayananda for the interest he created in him in the study of Sanskrit and indirectly in the study of Comparative Philosophy and Religion.

#### THE BRAHMO SAMAJ

Sris Chandra joined the Brahmo Samaj in 1881 and worked hard to make its principles known to the public. With this object, he wrote several articles in the *Arya* magazine for 1882. Thus in Vol. I of the *Arya* of Lahore, he wrote on "Brahmoism," which was followed by another on "Brahmo Marriage." In his city house were held the prayer-meetings of the Brahmo Samaj, which were attended by many educated persons of the town.

When he went to Calcutta in 1883, he attended the weekly services of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. But he found that the Brahmo Samaj was not suited to the

environment of India. His friend, Mr. Dwarka Das, M. A., had spent some time in Calcutta before he wrote in the *Arya* for May 1882 criticising the Brahmo Samaj. Sris replied in the same magazine by writing an article on "Brahmoism." But after his visit to Calcutta, he found that Mr. Dwarka Das was not far wrong in what he wrote.

Although he left the Brahmo Samaj, he did not lose his sympathy with it. Brahmo gentlemen and missionaries always experienced warm reception in his house.

His younger sister, who died before him, and her husband were Brahmos to the last.

*HOW THE BUILDING OF THE PUNJAB BRAHMO SAMAJ  
WAS CAPTURED (1882)*

In the early seventies of the last century, when land, building materials and wages of labourers were very cheap in Lahore, Babu Nabin Chandra Roy got a plot of land, raised public subscriptions and constructed a building for the Brahmo Samaj. But when there was a split in the Brahmo Samaj, the party of the New Dispensation Church got hold of the building, and those belonging to the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj conducted and attended their prayer-meetings in a rented house. When Sris Chandra joined the Brahmo Samaj, he did not like that the New Dispensationists, who were more Christians than Hindus, in his opinion, should be in possession of the building. It was necessary to increase the number of members sympathising with the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj and thus predominate over the handful of followers of Keshub Chandra and secure the building. As the acknowledged leader of the student community of Lahore, he persuaded



about a hundred students to enroll themselves as members of the Punjab Brahmo Samaj and then make it a branch of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. His advice was followed and thus was the building captured. This event took place in the beginning of 1882.

*BABU NAGENDRA NATH CHATTERJEE*

Babu Nagendra Nath Chatterjee was a well-known Bengali writer and speaker. His biography of Raja Ram-mohun Roy in Bengali is a well-known work. He was a missionary of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj and for some time belonged to the Theosophical Society. He was greatly interested in spiritualism. He visited Lahore in the summer of 1886 and stayed with Babu Abinash Chandra Majumdar. Here he made the acquaintance of Sris's brother. Sris Chandra was at that time officiating Munsif at Bareilly. Nagendra Babu wanted to visit that place on some private affairs and was advised to stay there with Sris, which he did. Both of them were of congenial taste and interested in the pursuit of truth and of life after death. So their acquaintance soon ripened into friendship. Whenever Sris Chandra visited Calcutta, he made it a point to see Nagendra Babu and talked about spiritualism and other religious subjects.

*PANDIT SIVA NATH SASTRI*

Pandit Siva Nath Sastri was the well-known leader of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. He paid frequent visits to Lahore when Sris was a student of the college there. A man of an inquisitive turn of mind as Sris was, he sought the acquaintance of that great Brahmo reformer.

Pandit Siva Nath Sastri was instrumental in establishing the Samadarshi Sabha at Lahore of which Sris Chandra was a very prominent member. Some of the meetings of this Sabha were held at his house and were attended by college students. The subjects for discussion at these meetings related mostly to social reforms, such as the abolition of the caste system, doing away with child marriage, remarriage of Hindu widows, and so on.

Sris Chandra always entertained a great regard for Pandit Siva Nath, not only for his ability but also for his sterling character. It was Pandit Siva Nath Sastri who drew him to the Brahmo Samaj.

*MODEL SCHOOL AT LAHORE*

We have referred to the varied activities of Sris even before he had decided what profession he would finally choose. The prospects in the Educational Service at that time were not so tempting as at present. So he turned to Law and studying it for two or three months came to Allahabad and appeared in the High Court Vakilship examination held in Janury, 1882. When the examination was over, he returned to Lahore, where shortly afterwards the model school in connection with the Training College was established. He was such a successful teacher that he was selected to fill the important post of its Head Master to organise it. He was the *beau ideal* of the students and they were very sorry when, the result of the Vakilship examination being known, he severed his connection with the Education Department in the Punjab.

*BENGALI SCHOOL*

Mention has already been made before that a school for Bengali boys and girls was established at Lahore by Babu Syama Charan. The affairs of this school fell in such disorder that in 1881, when Sris Chandra passed the B. A. Examination, he considered it necessary to take up its management. For the two years that he was in Lahore after passing the B. A. Examination, he looked after it at a great personal and pecuniary sacrifice. The school was at first located in the Siksha Sabha building, but when it was turned out of it, he had it removed to his own house.

*THE INDIAN NATIONAL SOCIETY*

In his school days Sris Chandra wrote and printed '*The Lay of Liberty*.' He imbibed the idea of making India free and great by the study of the history of India in particular and of other countries in general. English poets, especially Byron and Moore, kindled in his heart the fire of patriotic fervour. He recited the poems of Byron on Greece and Irish melodies of Moore to those students who looked to him as their guide, friend and philosopher.

But unhappily India differed greatly from those Christian countries of the West which fought for freedom and independence in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Christian world sympathised with and helped their co-religionists in Greece, Italy, Hungary and some other lands to liberate themselves from the yoke of alien rulers.

India not being a Christian country cannot expect any sympathy in her struggle for freedom from any

Christian country of the West. Then again Indians have not the good fortune of possessing a 'colorless' skin.

The Indians are moreover disunited amongst themselves. The Hindu-Moslem problem, which is at present becoming very acute in some provinces of India, had just made its appearance in the Punjab in the early eighties of the last century. First of all, in 1881, there was a fracas between the Hindus and Mahomedans at Multan. The Christian Anglo-Indian officials and others did not do anything to bring about good relations between the Hindus and Mahomedans, but some of them were 'not ashamed to pit Muhammadans against the Hindus. Thus, the *Arya* (April, 1883, p. 36), referred to a letter that appeared in the *Civil and Military Gazette* some days after the Mooltan riots, written by somebody at Mooltan. The writer went on to say "that the Muhammadans have more claims to our support, as they have their sympathies beyond the frontier, and are a warlike nation, unlike the Hindus, who have no such sympathies, and in whom the warlike spirit has almost died away. Comments are needless. The reader can see through the lines."

Then in 1882, when there was an agitation over the Hindi question in the Punjab, the Muhammadans opposed it so vehemently, that the question had to be shelved for good. The *Arya* in its issue of August, 1882 (pp. 137-38) commented on this subject thus :

#### HINDI VS. URDU

Memorials in favour of Hindi are pouring in from all sides upon Dr. Hunter, President of the Education Commission. No week passes but we hear of several such memorials forwarded to

him. The agitation upon this question has been so strong and so broadcast that it stands without a parallel in the literary history of our Province.

The question of high education and of the high elevation to the status of a complete University of the Punjab University College was also discussed very hotly and memorials were addressed to the Viceroy from several places. But in that there was not that breath of sympathy and earnest enthusiasm, which characterize discussions on the present question. The reason is not far to seek. The question of high education was discussed and agitated only by those who, having received high education themselves, could understand and appreciate its multifarious benefits. It was not participated in by the uneducated many who are not familiar with the sweets of academical studies. But the other question concerns all equally—the uneducated and the teeming millions more than perhaps the educated few. Hence we find that the illiterate people have taken more share in it than in the other, though as expected, on the educated men explaining the point at issue to them. Even the provinces where there are very few educated men and where the current of civilisation cannot yet be said to have reached, have come forward and sent memorials signed by thousands of men. Does not all this show beyond the possibility of doubt that the representation of some self-interested friends, who gave out the agitation to be the work of a few educated men, was not founded upon facts?

In the middle of 1882, the Hindu Sabha was established in Lahore and regarding this Sabha, a correspondent wrote in the *Arya* for August of that year :

Again, some have, in the height of their presumption, doubted that Hindi is a language that exists outside the heads of a few enthusiasts. Others have wasted columns of newspapers and talked away hours to prove in vain that Urdu is the dialect of the people in the Punjab. To remove this error it is enough to refer to the evidences before the Education Commission of Col

Halroyd and Mr. Sime, who as educational officers, are expected to know about the matter more than the sentimental writers and speakers above alluded to. The Director of Public Instruction has distinctly stated that Urdu is not the dialect of the people, while Mr. Simesaid that the language of the people of the Punjab is more Hindi than Urdu. Will not the opinion of the two great educationists in the Punjab seal the lips of the advocates of Urdu?

One more thing still remains to be noticed in this connection. It is the cry of some self-styled leaders of the Muhammadan community that their fellow religionists are opposed to the study of Hindi. First of all they forget in the heat of the controversy that their religionists, with the exception of a very small minority, are descended from Hindn ancestors, and as such speak the same languages as the Hindus. In the second place, they ignore the fact which has become too evident by this time that the Mahommedans in several places have also signed the memorials in favour of Hindi. More than this they have in some districts taken a very active part in getting signatures to such memorials and have paid subscriptions in aid of the furtherance of this cause. A Muhammadan gentleman even sent a communication in favour of Hindi to a vernacular paper. Above all we hear that the Muhammadans of a district are preparing a memorial in favour of Hindi to be shortly sent to Dr. Hunter. If this is true, and we have every reason to believe that it is, the fact that Hindi, not Urdu, is the language of the people at large, whether Hindus or Muhammadans, will be established beyond question.

(*The Arya*, pp. 137-38., Aug., 1882.)

At that time, Lord Ripon also announced his scheme of Local Self-government. This measure was not to the liking of Anglo-Indian officials. They tried hard to sow seeds of dissension between Hindus and Muhammadans.

An ardent patriot as Sris was, gauging the situation correctly, he tried hard to bring about good relations between Hindus and Muhammadans. With this object in

view, he founded the Indian National Society in Lahore. Nation-building was to be effected not merely by agitating for political rights and privileges. Every individual composing the nation has to be reformed, educated and cultured in the broadest sense. Evil customs of society have to be abolished. The caste system of the Hindus which stands in the way of union between the different communities of India, should be done away with.

The Indian National Society aimed at the attainment of these objects. Regarding it, wrote the *Arya* for April, 1883 :

This Society, whose founders are the educated gentlemen of the Punjab, is based upon very sound principles. It aims to create unity between the Hindus and the Muhammadans and to make individuals better in their moral, social and spiritual conditions. To strengthen the feeling of loyalty in the people the "National Anthem," which has recently been rendered for the Society into Punjabee by Lala Ram Dass Chhibur, a member of the Society, and which has been highly spoken of by the *Civil and Military Gazette*, the *Tribune* and several other papers, is invariably sung at the close of each meeting.

Several singers have been engaged by the Society whose duty will be to go about the streets of Lahore and sing the social songs composed by the Society. In these songs the evil consequences of evil customs are exposed and people are exhorted to reform their customs and manners.

The principles of the Society are very catholic and we hope it will bring into closer contact the different sections of the nation.

(*The Arya*—page 46, April 1883.)

Great was the enthusiasm of the members of the Indian National Society, which made a great sensation at

Lahore at that time. Sris Chandra wrote several national poems in English, which were greatly admired by the educated public. A national standard, reproduced below, was prepared and paraded through the streets of Lahore with the singing of national songs in English and Hindustani.



The Indian National Society was the precursor of the Indian National Congress, which, in all probability, would



not have come into existence had the Society not come to an end after the departure of Sris from Lahore. It is also not improbable that the Society inspired Mr. A. O. Hume with the idea of the Indian National Congress.

In the middle of April 1883, Sris went to Calcutta to get himself married. Any movement originating in Calcutta, which was then the metropolis of India, was sure to attract the notice of the people of other provinces of India. He had in contemplation the idea there to establish a branch of the National Society in Calcutta. But the Calcutta public were so engrossed with the Ilbert Bill controversy and the agitation following the incarceration of Babu Surendra Nath Banerji, that they did not feel any inclination for any constructive work for nation-building which was meant to accomplish.

On his return from Calcutta, his stay in Lahore was for a month only, and after he had left the Punjab for good, there was no one to guide the infant national movement, and so it languished and died.

It has been said that he wrote poems to inspire his countrymen with sentiments of love for their common motherland. These were collected and, together with the poems of other authors, were published as a pamphlet under the name of "*Indian National Songs and Lyrics*," of which the title page has been reproduced on page 105. It has long gone out of print. In dedicating these poems to the youths of his country he wrote :

"Ye hope of holy Ind, her strength, her life,  
Her morning star of joy, her dawn of day

On night of serfdom dark, her future help,  
 Her past life's sacred pledge, her present prop,  
 Her only hero, glory, saviour, shield,  
 In your soul's soft and plastic soil I place  
 With trembling hand and hope-elated heart  
 This sacred seed. May Heaven with rays benign  
 Mature its growth to all-enshadowing tree  
 (As *Kalpa* tree midst Nandana's azure field)  
 Beneath whose pleasant shade the sons of Ind  
 In peace and love may join and ever sing  
 The poem of her past and glorious days  
 And hallelujahs for her futurity.  
 Behold her piteous face and pity her,  
 Behold her fallen flag and raise it up,  
 And in her honour's war fear not to die :  
 Though life is sweet, yet sweeter far is death  
 Which martyr-heroes find in country's cause.  
 E'en gods do envy such a sacrifice  
 And glad would change this state with him who dies  
 To save his fatherland. Then bravely fight  
 Against fell foes who round about you crowd :  
 Disunion, envy, malice, priesthood's craft,  
 While British help with Heaven's help combined  
 Will back your valiant arms, and victory smile  
 On your proud prowess. India's heroes, rise."

The members of the Society had to sign the pledge of not taking any drug or liquor injurious to their health, and, as far as possible, of using country-made things and encouraging Indian industries. Thus it will be seen that the Society anticipated the Swadeshi movement by a couple of decades.

Mr. Satyendra Nath Tagore was the first Indian to enter the Indian Civil Service by the front door of open

competition. He was likewise the first to compose a patriotic song in Bengali, which is well known now in provinces outside Bengal also. Babu Raj Narain Bose translated it into English. Next to Mr. Tagore's song, Babu Hem Chandra Banerjee's *Bharat Sangit* was very spirited and popular in Bengal. But it was not known outside Bengal. Sris translated it into English. The translation, notwithstanding "Baboo English" at places, was a faithful rendering of the original into English. One of Babu Gobinda Chandra Roy's Bengali songs was a very popular one. Sris rendered it into English.

The cult of *Bande Mataram* had not then appeared. So singing national songs in the streets of Lahore in the early eighties of the last century should be considered as the first attempt made in India to inspire patriotism in the hearts of the people of the country.

Sris Chandra believed that England, if thoroughly informed of the condition of the people of India, would help them in their struggle for freedom as she had done the Greeks, Hungarians and also emancipated the Negro slaves. Hence he wrote :

"Heaven's help with British help combined," etc., etc.

Why did the Indian National Society fail ? The Punjab in the eighties was a very backward province. It was not fit soil for any national movement. Such a cause could not take its root there at that time. When the Indian National Congress was established, it could not hold its annual session there for a long time, because it was feared that, it being a non-regulation province, the

unsympathetic Anglo-Indian officials would prevent its meeting there. After Sris Chandra's departure from Lahore, there was none there to take up the work of the Society. So it died an untimely death.

In the eighties of the last century, Bombay was the centre for all political activities. Wrote Major Evans Bell :

"Western India is more decided and more ready than Bengal to appropriate Liberal principles and methods, and much more likely to initiate a serious and well-organised movement against inequalities of race. There are geographical and, above all, historical conditions that place the centre of political thought and action nearer to the cities of Bombay and Poona than to Calcutta or any place in the north of India.

"The last chapters of self-development and self-dependence in India belong to the Western region. The Mahratta Confederation emancipated the Hindus and extinguished Mussalman domination, destroyed the Mogul Empire, and set up religious and social tolerance. Even the battle of Panipal was a triumph and a glory for the Mahrattas. They fought in the cause of "India for the Indians," while the Great Mohammedan Princes of Delhi, of Oude and the Deccan stood aside, intriguing and trimming. And though the Mahrattas were defeated, the victorious Afghans retired, and never again interfered in the affairs of India. The Mahrattas did more.—they lifted the cold shade of aristocracy and caste from the ranks of the people. They opened a career to talent, irrespective of birth and creed. High commands, the first places in council, great estates, even sovereignties fell to men of humble origin. Moslems were welcomed to comradeship on equal terms. Brahmins were preferred for their caste, and had to prove their capacity, in defiance of tradition and scripture, by leading armies to the field. Mahratta campaigns and conquests brought the more distant parts of the continent closer together, and made their tribes and their languages mutually known.

"From the very fact of its comparative prosperity under the Permanent Settlement, and the large influence of its wealthy landlords, political activity in Bengal, especially in Calcutta, has hitherto been chiefly concentrated on its local affairs and interests. General criticism of British rule, on an extended field, and from Imperial points of view, has occupied far more attention in Western India. In Poona, the capital of the Peishwas, and in Bombay, the great centre of commerce and finance for the Deccan, Guzerat, Malwa, and the Central States, the interrupted work of the Mahratta confederation is carried on by men like Dadabhai Naoroji and his disciples. In the proceedings of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha, and of the several Associations in Bombay, Indians are called to united and concerted action in politics, and strictures are constantly published in general agreement with those of General Briggs' work on the Land Tax, \* \* \* proving to demonstration the inordinately expensive and exhaustive nature of British administration. Nor is the more delicate question of its exclusive and scornful character kept quite out of sight." *Memoir of General John Briggs, by Major Evans Bell. London. Chatto and Windus, Piccadilly, 1885. Pp. 274—276.*

Had Sris Chandra's lot been cast in Bombay in 1883, and had he started the Indian National Society there, it was probable that his Society would not have met with that fate which it did after his departure from Lahore.

Lala Lajpat Rai, a few years back, regretted that there was not a single person in the Punjab who had made the national cause his own. It can be very easily imagined what was the condition of the Punjab then forty years before. The Lala lamented the paucity of national workers in his province. The soil where Sris scattered seeds was sandy and barren and, therefore, it was no wonder that all his efforts to plant the tree of

national freedom in the Punjab were not apparently successful at that time.

The Indian National Society differed from the Congress in not being composed of the "microscopic minority". It appealed to the masses by parading and singing and unfurling the national standard in the streets of Lahore. Its work consisted not merely in passing resolutions and begging by memorialising the Government. People must be prepared to attain and enjoy self-government. Lord Ripon's Local Self-government Scheme in 1882 and the agitation over the Ilbert Bill in the beginning of 1883 seemed to have influenced Sris in establishing the National Society.

What did the Indian National Society aim at? It aimed at perfect individuals, because it is the character behind the man which tells. Sris Chandra attributed the failure of the Congress to the want of character in some of its leaders. What a contrast between George Washington, the first President of the United States, who never told a lie, and some Presidents of the Congress,

As regards the Indian national standard, we do not know if any one before Sris suggested or prepared a national standard and paraded it in public.

About the Indian National Society *The Tribune* of 9th June 1883 wrote thus :

"We hear with great pleasure that a Society has been formed in Lahore for the union of the Hindoos and Mahomedans of this province. The noble object the Society has in view has the sympathy of the entire native population of India. It has not been formed a day too soon. The Multan and Salem riots and the Bahawalpur disturbances have indicated to the educated

portions of both communities the necessity of remedying the evil by the formation of an association like the present. It consists of young rising spirits of the Punjab assisted by their Bengalee brethren. The elderly gentlemen are naturally more conservative and more averse to the adoption of new and liberal principles, but we doubt not that when they will understand the inestimable benefits likely to accrue from the efforts of an association like this, they will hasten to swell the number of its members with all their might and influence. The children of India consist mainly of Hindus and Mahomedans. Their aims and objects and aspirations are all in common. The present Anglo-Indian agitation against the native jurisdiction bill has taught them that they are equal objects of hatred and aspersion to the superior race. It behoves the reformers of both communities to move heaven and earth to dispel the prejudiced notions of their ignorant co-religionists and to bind the Hindoos and Mahomedans into one common bond of brotherly union. The rise and fall of India depends upon this attempt".

#### THE ARYA

The Arya Samaj was growing into importance and almost every town of any size in the Punjab had an Arya Samaj, where educated Punjabis congregated once a week for worship. But there was no organ in English to record its activities or disseminate its principles and teachings, and Mr. Ratan Chand Bary, an educated Punjabi gentleman of Lahore—a great friend of Sris Chandra—tried to remove this want by starting *The Arya* in 1882. It was a monthly journal of 24 pages, Royal size. Although it was edited and published by him, he greatly depended on Sris Chandra for literary contributions. As long as the paper existed, there was hardly any issue which did not contain some writing of his. The first

number published his article on "The Theory of Evolution from the Aryan point of view." Madame Blavatsky noticed it in the *Theosophist* for March 1882.

Sris Chandra recognised the importance of teaching Science for the welfare of the people of this country by correcting their erroneous notions and thus helping them to get rid of their superstitions and prejudices. He wrote in *The Arya* (Vol. I) about "Science Associations for India." His contributions to *The Arya* in Vol. I. were :

(1) Theory of Evolution from the Aryan point of view (pp. 6, 27).

(2) Gravitation and Levitation (p. 45).

(3) The seven-headed horse (p. 74).

(4) Hindi *versus* Urdu (p. 86).

(5) Brahmoism (p. 91).

(6) The *Stri-Vilap* (p. 135).

(7) The Nature of Consciousness (p. 154).

(8) Science Associations for India (p. 159).

(9) Physiological Yoga of Tantras (p. 166).

(10) Brahmo marriage (p. 187).

(11) *Bhojan Vichar* (p. 218).

#### LALA NATHU RAM NAND

Lala Lajpat Rai, after passing the Entrance Examination, came to Lahore in 1881 and joined the college there. He was at that time a sympathiser of the Brahmo Samaj and attended the worship of that Samaj conducted by Pandit Shiv Narain Agnihotri. He made the acquaintance of Sris Chandra and was a frequent visitor to his house. When Sris Chandra took charge of the Bengali school,



to make it efficient, he wanted a teacher not only competent but also of good character for his school. Lala Lajpat Rai recommended to him Lala Nathu Ram Nand, who belonged to his caste and native place. Accordingly, he was brought to Lahore. Lala Nathu Ram Nand could write Urdu with facility. Inspired by Sris Chandra, he started a monthly in Urdu, named *Swanha-i-Umri* or biography. The first few issues were devoted to the biography of Raja Rammohun Ray—translated from Babu Nagendra Nath Chatterjee's Bengali work. Lala Nathu Ram did not at that time know Bengali. He was helped in his translation by Sris and his brother.

This biography of Raja Rammohun Ray in Urdu made that great Hindu reformer better known in Northern India than before its publication. The *Swanha-i-Umri* was noticed by *The Arya* in Vol. I. (p. 107).

This magazine aimed at inspiring the rising generation to follow in the foot-steps of great and true men and to work in the cause of humanity and make their country free and great. It was intended to place the lives of Washington, Mazzini and Garibaldi before the Urdu readers of Northern India.

Lala Nathu Ram Nand composed several national songs and poems in Urdu, when the Indian National Society was established, and he published the pamphlet "*Indian National Songs and Lyrics*."

After Sris Chandra left Lahore, Lala Nathu Ram joined the editorial staff of an Urdu newspaper known as the *Kohinoor*.

## MUNSHI GULAB SINGH

Munshi Gulab Singh was a man of humble origin. He did not know English, but read Urdu in the Lahore Normal School and after leaving that school, kept a small shop of Urdu, Persian and Hindi books for sale. Being of an enterprising nature, he established a small lithographic press and called it Mufid-i-Am. He sought the help of Sris Chandra and at his advice published a *Catechism of Physical Geography* dictated in Urdu to a Muhammadan Munshi engaged for that purpose. With his help he started the *Students' Friend*—a bilingual monthly journal—the English portion being written and edited by Sris Chandra. Such was the beginning of the Mufid-i-Am Press and the career of Gulab Singh.

Many a night Gulab slept at Sris's house, writing in Urdu articles and notes for his journal and receiving advice on many subjects.

Gulab Singh's rise was due not a little to the help he received from Sris Chandra in diverse ways.

## THE MIDDLE SCHOOL EXAMINATION PAPERS

When Sris Chandra was appointed Head Master of the Model School at Lahore, he collected and published the question papers in all subjects of the Middle School Examinations conducted by the Educational Department of the Punjab from 1869 to 1882. The papers were of great use to the student community in the Punjab.

## BABU ABINASH CHANDRA MAJUMDAR

Babu Abinash Chandra Majumdar was a Bengali resident of Cawnpur. He received his education in the

Benares College. After passing the F. A. Examination of the Calcutta University, his circumstances did not allow him to prosecute further studies. So he came to Lahore in 1878 in search of employment. He was employed as a clerk in the Railway office. While at Lahore he did not identify himself with any public movement. But he sympathised with Sris Chandra and his class-fellows in the "students' rebellion" and wrote in *The Bengalee* giving their version of that affair. It appeared in *The Bengalee* of 1880 (31st July) on the first page, and the editor made the significant comment : "Dr. Leitner should have been taught a lesson there and then which he would not have forgotten," etc.

The railway office in which he was employed was removed to Rawalpindi early in 1881 and here Abinash Babu became an important person for the part he played in the public life there. There was a large Bengali colony in Rawalpindi, amongst whom were several Brahmos. They established a Brahmo Samaj there and Abinash Babu joining it became the life and soul of it. Sris visited Rawalpindi and stayed there for two months—August and September, 1881. He was at that time interested in the movement against the establishment of the Punjab University as a purely oriental institution. With the help of Abinash Babu he succeeded in getting a Memorial to the Viceroy signed by the principal residents of Rawalpindi protesting against the raising the Punjab University College to the status of a University. Sris persuaded Abinash Babu to join the Theosophical Society. When *The Arya* was started in 1882, Abinash

Babu also contributed to it. At Rawalpindi he started *The Indian*—a weekly journal—in 1885. To its columns, Sris was a very frequent contributor as long as it existed. His *Folk Tales of Hindustan* originally appeared in it.

Sris Chandra severed his connection with the Brahmo Samaj in 1883 and Abinash Babu left the Theosophical Society in 1885 after the Coulomb affair. Although both remained friends as long as they lived, they had no opportunity to work together for any common cause.

#### LALA RATAN CHAND BARY

Lala Ratan Chand Bary was a Punjabi Kshattri, received his education in the Lahore Mission School and was a clerk in the Accountant-General's Office there. He was older than Sris Chandra by about twelve years. As neighbours at Lahore, they came to know each other in 1873 when the Arya Samaj was established at Lahore. Both were interested in spiritualism, planchette writing, table-turning and mesmerism. He and Sris Chandra went to Amritsar to meet Olcott and Blavatsky when they first visited the Punjab in October 1880. Regarding this visit, Olcott has given an account in his *Old Diary Leaves*.

The next day (26th October, 1880), a delegation of Samajists came from Lahore, headed by Rattan Chand Bary and Siris Chandra Basu, two most intelligent and honourable gentlemen, whose friendship I have been fortunate enough to keep up to the present moment. A very interesting conversation and discussion was held with some thirty or forty of the Swamiji's followers, and in the evening, when we were alone with the two above-named friends, H. P. B. rang the "fairy-bells" more clearly and

beautifully than I had heard her do them before in India. She made a proposal to them which led to an unfortunate misunderstanding between them and herself, which it is best that I should narrate to prevent the fact being cited against her by an enemy in the future. Up to that time Mr. Sinnett had had no opportunity of discussing Indian mystical philosophy with any educated Indian, much to his and our regret. His correspondence with Mahatma K. H. was going on, but he wanted to come face to face with him or one of his pupils. Finding Mr. Rattan Chand well qualified to be such a spokesman, H. P. B.—as she told me and him—with the Master's concurrence, tried to persuade him to go to Mr. Sinnett as the bearer of a note from K. H. and play the part of his messenger. He was to abstain from giving Mr. S. any facts about himself, his name, condition, and place of residence, but to answer fully all his questions on religious and philosophical subjects: the assurance being given him by H. P. B. that every needed idea and argument should be put into his head at the moment when needed. Mr. R. C. and his friend S. C. B., not aware of the extent to which this thought-transference could be made, and seeing neither Mahatma nor letter about H. P. B., showed the strongest repugnance to undertaking the affair. Finally, however, they consented and left for Lahore to get the required short leave and return next day. When they were gone H. P. B. expressed to me her satisfaction, saying that the mission would be a real one, would have the happiest effect on Mr. Sinnett, and be very fortunate for the Karma of the two young men. The next day, instead of their returning, a telegram came to say that they positively refused to carry out the compact: and in a letter they plainly said that they would not be parties to such an act of deception, as it seemed to them. H. P. B.'s annoyance and indignation were strongly expressed. She did not hesitate to call them a couple of precious fools for throwing away such a chance as few persons had had to work with the Masters in accomplishing great results: and she told me that if they had come, the letter would have been dropped out of space right before their eyes and all would have gone well with them.

Mr. Ratan Chand Bary started the *Arya* in 1882 and Sris wrote in it as long as it existed. They remained friends and corresponded as long as Ratan Chand lived. He passed away in January 1899.

#### NO PUBLIC LIBRARY AT LAHORE

We have already pointed out that when Sris Chandra was a student at Lahore, there was no public library there. So he frequented the library of the *Anjuman-i-Punjab* kept in the Siksha Sabha Hall. There were the works of Sir William Jones and some of the volumes of the *Asiatic Researches*. Perusal of the works of Sir William Jones made him determined to follow in his foot-steps.

In the Punjab Brahmo Samaj, there was a collection of the works of Raja Rammohun Ray, old volumes of the *Tattva-Bodhini Patrika*, and some other religious books. Reading these made Sris Chandra look upon Raja Rammohun Roy as a scholar to imitate.

In later years, the study of the works of Pandit Isvarchandra Vidyasagar made him consider Vidyasagar as a *क्षेत्रज्ञमा* (one born under auspicious stars). He said that the title of Vidyasagar should not be conferred on any one else. As Indra alone is *Satakratu* (शतक्रतु), so Isvarchandra alone should be known as Vidyasagar.

#### KALI PRASANNA CHATTERJI

Babu Ka'i Prasanna Chatterji was one of Sris Chandra's class-fellows in the Lahore Mission School. He was a man of versatile genius but could not pass any examina-

tion. He could write and speak English with great facility and was a well-known speaker in Urdu and Punjabi. He served for several years as assistant editor of the *Tribune* of Lahore—the post of which Sris Chandra was the first holder. Kali Prasanna always acknowledged Sris as a leader and when a few days after his death he visited Santiniketan, on being asked to speak about Sris, he narrated the anecdote of how the Punjab Brahmo Samaj building was captured (already mentioned before) by Sris Chandra for the Sadharanists.

Kali Prasanna did not set himself to work steadily at a thing, and notwithstanding his undoubted ability, left hardly any work of permanent value, except perhaps a few songs in Punjabi which were at one time very popular in the Punjab.

#### INDIA—WHAT CAN IT TEACH US.

In 1882, Professor Max Müller delivered a course of lectures to the probationers of the Indian Civil Service at Cambridge on “India—what can it teach us.” These lectures were reproduced in some of the Indian papers. Sris Chandra was at that time working for the Vakildship examination of the Allahabad High Court. He was so much impressed with these lectures, that he said he would devote himself to the study of Hindu Law from the original sources on passing the Law Examination and see what India had done for Comparative Jurisprudence. The Science of Comparative Philology and that of Comparative Mythology could not have come into existence but for the discovery of Sanskrit. But the contribution of India

to "Comparative Jurisprudence" was not receiving the attention of jurists and lawyers as it ought to have done.

He at the same time advised his brother to study Hindu Medicine and find out the contribution of India to the Science of Medicine. Following his advice, his brother did it and wrote an Essay on "Hindu Medicine" which was published in *Guy's Hospital Gazette* of London and is referred to in the Bibliography given at the end of Garrison's *History of Medicine*—a well-known work on the subject published in America.



## CHAPTER VII

### *SRIS CHANDRA AS A VAKIL—INDIAN NATIONAL SONGS AND LYRICS—HIS TRANSLATION OF PANINI.*

#### *SRIS CHANDRA AS A VAKIL.*

The year 1883 formed an important landmark in the life of Sris Chandra. He appeared in the Vakilship examination held in Allahabad in January and passed it with credit, standing fifth in order of merit, the first place being occupied by Pandit Moti Lal Nehru.

A few days after his return to Lahore from Allahabad, was established the Model School of Lahore (which we have already referred to) in connection with the Training College there. Mr. Dick, the Principal of the College, went to the District High School and asked its Head Master to transfer some of the students from his school to fill the classes of the new school. But no students volunteered to join the new school. Mr. Dick was about to leave the premises of the school in despair when its Head Master asked Sris Chandra to persuade the students to join the Model School. On his speaking to the students, they said that they would join the new school, if he were appointed its Head Master. This being communicated to Mr. Dick, he gladly agreed to the proposal of the students and the prize appointment of the Head Mastership of the first Government Model School was offered to Sris Chandra. He was asked to choose his own

staff and organise it, which he did with great credit to himself and profit to the students. While serving as a teacher he found that the school students of the Punjab, who were required to pass the Departmental Middle School Examination before they could be promoted to the higher class, failed in large numbers in that examination. To give them an idea of the questions in different subjects which they were required to answer, he conceived the idea of collecting all the examination papers ever since the Departmental test was instituted in the province and published them. This he did and his compilation was of great use to the student community in the Punjab.

On the result of the Vakilship examination being published in March 1883, he severed his connection with the Educational Department. But no sooner was he out of the official trammels than he, as has already been pointed out, proceeded to establish the Indian National Society.

#### HIS MARRIAGE

On his passing the Vakilship examination, his mother and other relatives pressed him to marry. Sris Chandra completed his twenty-second year on 20th March, 1883. He belonged to the *kulins* of the Bengali Kayastha community—consisting of Ghosh, Basu and Mitra. As the eldest son, there was no choice for him but to be married to a Ghosh or a Mitra girl. There was some superstition in his family about marrying a Mitra girl. It was almost impossible to secure a Ghosh girl of the same status as his. So his mother took him with other

members of the household to Calcutta in the middle of April, 1883. It was for the first time that Sris Chandra saw Calcutta. His mother revisited Bengal after thirty years. Her mother was then alive; the meeting of the mother and daughter after more than a quarter of a century—and her being a widow and passing through calamities and troubles of many kinds—was a very pathetic one.

Sris Chandra also saw several of the relatives, who hailed from his ancestral home. One of his father's uncles who had then completed more than eighty years attended the wedding ceremony. It was with mixed feelings that Sris Chandra met these relatives of his for the first time in his life.

He was married to a daughter of Babu Ambika Charan Ghosh, B. A., B. L., Vakil, High Court, Calcutta. He was of an enterprising nature and had speculated in rice trade and opened a shop in Rangoon. He lost very heavily in business. Finding it difficult to meet the liabilities, he migrated to the Central Provinces, a few months after the marriage of his daughter with Sris Chandra, where he was a very successful lawyer and was thus able to clear all debts, and never again in his life went into any business.

The agitation over the Ilbert Bill question was still in full swing when Sris Chandra reached Calcutta in the last week of April. But he was not there for a week, when Surendra Nath Banerji was hauled up for contempt of court and convicted and imprisoned for two months. Never before in the annals of Calcutta, had such an agitation taken place in that metropolis as on this

occasion. The wave of this agitation, started from Calcutta, reached the farthest corners of India. In almost every city and town of note, mass meetings were held condemning the action of the High Court in convicting and imprisoning Surendra Nath Banerji. He was the hero of the hour.

The agitation over Surendra Nath's conviction affected the cause of the Indian National Society. When Sris Chandra went to Calcutta, he thought of seeing the leaders of society there and interesting them in the Indian National Society. He knew Surendra Nath Banerji personally, as he had reported his lectures delivered in Lahore in the Christmas week of 1879. So he thought that if he approached Surendra Nath and explained to him the aims and objects of the Indian National Society, there would be little difficulty in securing his support in establishing a branch of the Society in Calcutta. But this was not to be.

Srish Chandra was married in the last week of May, after which he left for Lahore in the middle of June. The marriage renewed his connection with Bengal.

#### *LAHORE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY*

It has already been mentioned that Sris Chandra became a Theosophist and established a Theosophical Society in Lahore. Let us see how that Society was disfranchised by the President of the Theosophical Society.

Rai Bishan Lal, M.A., belonged to a very respectable family of Bareilly and was the first from the North-West (now the United) Provinces to pass the M. A. Examination

of the Calcutta University. This seemed to have turned his head and sometimes he became a raving lunatic. Otherwise, he was an intelligent man and was not devoid of public spirit. In the reactionary days following the assumption of the title of the Empress of India by the Queen of England, it was not considered expedient by Government to spread high education in Northern India. With this object in view, Government abolished the Delhi, Agra and Bareilly colleges. Bishan Lal was the moving spirit in re-establishing the last institution by raising subscriptions for it. He joined the Theosophical Society when its headquarters was in Bombay and was a well known figure in the circle of the Theosophists of that time. Mr. A. O. Hume as a leading Theosophist forwarded Rupees five thousands to Bishan Lal for the college. Hume's influence with the then Viceroy, Lord Ripon, helped greatly in the resuscitation of the Bareilly college.

Bishan Lal came to Lahore in the beginning of April 1883 and persuaded Sris Chandra and some other leading citizens of Lahore to sign the following notice and gave it a wide circulation :

"An advanced *chela* (on his way from the North) has condescended to attend the meeting, and to show certain test phenomena, in order to convince the people as to the reality of occult forces, and will also narrate his personal experiences in *yoga-vidya* as well as give an account of the Mahatmas of the Theosophical Society."

The meeting in question was held in the Siksha Sabha Hall on the afternoon of 3rd April 1883 and was very largely attended. John Campbell Oman was also present at

meeting and has narrated the proceedings in his "*Indian Life—Religious and Social*." (pp. 36-41).

Bishan Lal was then not in his lucid interval and was not therefore responsible for what he said and did. Colonel Olcott coming to hear of the proceedings of Bishan Lal was enraged against the members of the Lahore Theosophical Society, under whose auspices Bishan Lal delivered his lecture, called them "Shylocks," and disfranchised the Lahore Branch. (See the *Theosophist* for May, 1883).

So Sris Chandra's labour of love in bringing the Lahore branch of the Theosophical Society into existence, seemed for a time, at least, to have been lost.

#### SRIS CHANDRA LEAVES LAHORE

After his return from Calcutta in the middle of June 1883, Sris Chandra's stay in Lahore was for a month only, and he devoted that time to the cause of the Indian National Society, compiled the pamphlet on *Indian National Songs and Lyrics* and gave it to Nathu Ram Nand for publication. He at last settled to practise in Meerut, for which place he started on the 19th July 1883. The courts closing in October, he came to Lahore to spend the vacation there and returned to Meerut in November when the courts reopened. He spent his leisure hours during 1883, in writing his work *An Easy Introduction to Yoga Philosophy*, which was published serially in the pages of *The Arya* of Lahore. Sris Chandra came to Lahore in October 1883 when the courts at Meerut were closed for the Dussera vacation. Babu Sitala Kanta Chatterji was

also at Lahore at that time, preparing for the Pleadership Examination. Sris Chandra spent his time mostly in coaching him in Law.

Swami Dayananda Saraswati died towards the end of October 1883. A mass meeting was held in the Arya Samaj premises, Vachchowali, Lahore, to express the sense of loss which the country had suffered by the untimely death of that great reformer. It has already been shown that Sris Chandra also attended the meeting and composed a poem in English commemorative of the occasion. This was read in the meeting and was subsequently published in *The Arya* for December 1883.

#### INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION

There was the International Exhibition held in Calcutta which Sris Chandra went to see in December 1883. Never before had such a large exhibition been held in India and Sris went everyday to see it as long as he stayed in Calcutta.

#### SASI BHUSAN SARVADHIKARY

Babu Sasi Bhusan Sarvadhikary was a very poor Bengali student who came to Lahore in 1878 and lived on the charity of some of the Bengalis of that place. He was very eccentric in his manners and of very irritable temper. Surendra Nath Banerji's visit to Lahore in 1879-80 and his lectures there made this Bengali student eager to imitate him and shine as an orator. Handbills were printed and distributed announcing his lecture in the Siksha Sabha Hall one day early in March 1880. The students community of Lahore made fun of him by calling

him Don Quixote and writing so after his name in the printed handbill. This enraged him so much that at the appointed time when the hall was crowded with audience chiefly composed of students, he said that he would not address them as "gentlemen," for their behaviour did not entitle them to that epithet ! The meeting broke up in great disorder.

Sasi Bhusan Sarbadhikari was of very mediocre ability and could not pass any examination. But his ambition knew no bounds. He had seen students, failures in this country but superior to him in intelligence, proceed to England and return as Barristers-at-Law. He tried to do so. Knowing that Sris Chandra was authorised to admit persons as members of the Theosophical Society without any Entrance fee, he came to him and begged the favour of enrolling him as a member of the Theosophical Society. After becoming a member of that Society, he begged money from the brother Theosophists and other charitably disposed persons to enable him to proceed to Bombay in search of some job. Sris Chandra helped him according to his means. It was in 1881, at a time when Sris Chandra was the Assistant Editor of the *Tribune* and carried influence with the educated gentry there, Sarvadhikari asked him the further favour of giving him a letter of introduction to Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, which Sris Chandra did. Going to Bombay, Sarvadhikari was the guest of the founders of the Theosophical Society and securing a job in one of the steamers sailed for England. He lived for some time on the charity of brother Theosophists till he was helped by one Lord Cochrane there in getting



admission in Gray's Inn and was called to the Bar. After returning to India, he showed his gratitude to Lord Cochrane by starting a paper and naming it *Cochrane*. He forgot that he would not have been what he was, but for the help rendered to him by Sris Chandra. He was a very quarrelsome person, and died in 1907, while he was suspended by the Allahabad High Court as an Advocate.

*SRIS CHANDRA AS VAKIL AT MEERUT*

Sris Chandra, as we have seen, left Lahore for Meerut in July 1883. At that time, there were only two other Vakils of the High Court practising there; the rest were either District or Munsifs' court pleaders. So it was not difficult for him to obtain briefs from the very start, although he had no friends or relations there.

Babu Sitala Kanta Chatterji, who was in editorial charge of the *Tribune*, had some misunderstanding with its proprietor, severed his connection with it in 1882 and went back to Bengal to seek for some other job. When Sris Chandra passed the Vakilship Examination, he advised Sitala Kanta to study Law and appear in the District Court Pleadership Examination of the Allahabad High Court. Sitala Kanta had passed the Entrance Examination of the Calcutta University and, not being a graduate, could not appear in the Vakilship Examination at once. Acting on his advice, Sitala Kanta studied Law and passed the Examination held in January 1884. Sris asked him to become his partner in practice at Meerut. When Sitala Kanta went to Meerut, he helped him in every way that lay in his power. Both of them worked together for the

public weal and infused new life into many a public institution there. Unfortunately, Sitala Kanta was then showing symptoms of unsoundness of mind. So Sris could not pull on with him. Partnership in practice was dissolved and Sris not thinking it proper to set up as a rival to his partner, applied for Munsifship, to which he was appointed as a temporary measure in March 1886, when he left Meerut for good. Poor Sitala Kanta died shortly after.

It should be noted here that Babu Sitala Kanta Chatterji was partner in name, for he did not know Urdu, the language of the Court. So Sris used to conduct cases, while Sitala Kanta helped him in finding out references, etc.

In 1885, he tried to return to Lahore and practise in the Chief Court there. He collected the testimonials of his old professors and teachers then living and submitted these with his application to the Chief Court, but he was not permitted to practise there without passing the Law Examination of the Punjab University. Sris Chandra came to Lahore in June 1884 and stayed there for about a month to remove his family to Meerut. The Lahore establishment was broken up, and from this time, his family became Hindustanis by residence.

During his short stay at Lahore, he wrote for the *Regenerator of Aryavarta*, a weekly which was then edited by his friend, R. C. Bary.

During this year, he translated the *Shiva Samhita* from Sanskrit. This was published serially in *The Arya*.

It was for the first time that a Tantric work was translated into the English language.

*JOHNSON'S HITOPODESA*

This work was the text book for the European students of Sanskrit in the fifties and sixties of the last century. Its excellence consisted in its glossary, in which every word in the *Hitopadesa* was transliterated, translated and its grammatical construction given. It served as a model to Sris Chandra in his study of the Vedas, Upanishads, philosophical *sutras* and law books.

*RAI BAHADUR PITAMBNR JOSHI, M.A.*

Rai Bahadur Pitambar Joshi, M. A., was a school master in Meerut in 1884, when he made the acquaintance of Sris Chandra there. Pitambar Joshi had purchased the two parts of the *Hitopadesa*, edited and translated by Professor Johnson, from a second-hand book-shop and presented them to Sris, who had then commenced the study of Sanskrit in right earnest. He writes in a letter dated Sultanpur, 24th February, 1926, to Sris Chandra's brother, Major B. D. Basu :

"When I made Sris' acquaintance at Meerut in 1884, it struck me how versatile were his scholarly attainments : a gentleman passing examinations successively in such disconnected subjects as Persian, Arabic and Zoology with English as the main subject. To the best of my recollection, he knew a little of Hebrew also. He evinced a desire to learn Sanskrit, but no one could dream then that he would produce such excellent commentaries on *Ashtadhyayi* and Upanishads as he did in later years. He was a genius indeed and I deplore that he did not live longer to enrich the world by his literary legacies."

At Meerut, Sris Chandra utilised his spare time in literary

pursuits. It was here that he wrote the *Folk Tales of Hindusthan*, which originally appeared in the *Indian* of Rawalpindi, a weekly journal that was started and conducted by his friend Babu Abinash Chandra Majumdar, who afterwards became a zealous missionary of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. Sris was a regular contributor to this journal, as well as to the *Regenerator of Aryavarta* of Mr. R. C. Bary of Lahore.

Mr. Malabari of Bombay visited Meerut in 1885 in connection with the Age of Consent Bill. Sris Chandra felt the necessity of the measure so strongly that he supported it by writing a series of articles in *The Arya*. The articles were the result of a deep study of the Hindu law books.

SRIS CHANDRA AND SUNDER LAL

Although Sunder Lal and Sris sat in the same Examination Hall at Agra for the B. A. Examination, which they passed in the same year, they did not know each other till Sunder Lal went to Meerut in 1885 to conduct a law suit on the opposite side of which appeared Sris Chandra. Sunder Lal lost the case, but he could not help admiring the legal acumen and learning of his friend on the opposite. So he told Sris not to hide his light under a bushel at Meerut, but to come to Allahabad to practise in the High Court there. As Sris knew shorthand also, it would not be difficult for him to get the appointment of Judgment-writer there.

SRIS CHANDRA LEAVES MEERUT

(1886)

Meerut was a large cantonment in Northern India till quite recently. The Punjeh scare produced a great

excitement there in 1885. The Indian Mutiny of 1857 started from Meerut. It was perhaps with the object of keeping the people loyal there, that H. R. H. the Duke of Connaught was appointed Commandant of Meerut.

But Sris kept his head cool, practised his profession, and spent his leisure in literary pursuits. He continued his *Folk Tales of Hindusthan* in the *Indian* of Rawalpindi.

*SRIS APPOINTED AS JUDGMENT WRITER*

Sris Chandra was Munsif at Bareilly for five months only. After the re-opening of the High Court in November 1886, he came to Allahabad and joined it. Mr. Douglas Straight was the Acting Chief Justice at that time. Sris used to attend his as well as other judges' courts and, to while away his time, for he could not sit idle, reported in shorthand their judgments. This habit of Sris attracted the notice of Mr. Justice Straight, who sending for him to his chamber asked him what he wrote in Court. Sris told him what he did. Mr. Justice Straight asked him to read out what he had written in shorthand. The accurateness of the report so impressed Mr. Justice Straight, that he at once appointed him to act as the first judgment-writer of the Court—an office which had then fallen vacant by the resignation of Mr. Arthur Strachey, who afterwards rose to be the Chief Justice of that very Court.

Sris Chandra acted as the first judgment writer on a salary of Rs. 200 per mensem for a few months only. Great injustice was done to him, when a half-educated

man was imported from Ireland, who was not conversant with shorthand, but whose only qualification seemed to be that he possessed a 'colorless' skin,—was made to supersede Sris. This man was allowed to draw Rs. 250 a month, while Sris drew only Rs. 200. Such was the notion of justice of the authorities!

#### ALLAHABAD

When Sris Chandra had joined the High Court Bar at Allahabad there were hardly twenty-five lawyers practising there. It was by no means congested.

#### STUDY OF HINDU LAW

Settling at Allahabad, Sris Chandra turned his attention to the study of Hindu Law from original sources. The Mitakshara School of Law is valid in Northern India. He commenced its study with the help of learned Pandits. As was usual with him to thoroughly master a subject he went on translating it while reading it. He found that no one can master Hindu Law unless he is thoroughly conversant with the Paninian system of Grammar. So he turned his attention to its study, with the result that he produced the *Astadhyayi of Panini* and translated the *Siddhanta Kaumudi*.

#### THE INDIAN UNION

Allahabad had at that time the *Indian Union*, a weekly paper conducted in English, to represent the cause of the Indian public of the North-Western Provinces (as the United Provinces were then called). It had not a very prosperous career and changed hands several times

before it came to be owned by the Hon'ble Pandit Ajodhya Nath. Sris was asked to take its editorial charge, for which he received an honorarium of Rs. 100 a month. During his editorship the paper found a larger circle of readers than before and the number of its subscribers rose to about 1200, which it had never reached before. The following letter from Pandit Ajodhya Nath to him shows the ability with which he conducted the paper.

No. 122

Allahabad, the 17th October, 1890.

My Dear Baboo Srish Chandra,

Herewith I send Rs. 50, your honorarium for the 1st half of October. I take this opportunity of thanking you heartily for the help you have been good enough to render me when I was in need of it and for the pains you have taken in editing the *Indian Union*.

Yours Sincerely

Ajoodhia Nath Pandit.

Pandit Ajodhya Nath looked upon the Bengalis in the United Provinces as "foreigners" and called them so, forgetting that he, as a Kashmiri, was a greater "foreigner" than the Bengalis. Yet he could not get his work done without the help of a Bengali "foreigner."

#### HIS BROTHER

His brother Baman Das (the late Major B. D. Basu, I.M.S.) was just six years and four days younger than Sris Chandra. He supervised his education, advised him to study Hindu medicine and indigenous drugs when he joined the Medical College at Lahore. He acted on his advice and studied Hindu medicine by attending the

Ayurvedic class in the Oriental College, then taught by Pandit Janardan, a well-known Ayurvedic physician of Lahore. The result of his labour was the production of the *Indian Medicinal Plants*.

He inspired him with the idea of going to England and completing his medical studies there. Accordingly, in the month of July 1888, Baman Das left for England. As Sris had to supply him with the greater part of the funds needed for his education in England, he worked hard at his profession to make both ends meet. Lachmi Chand Saran was his clerk at that time and is still (in February 1929) alive. He says that as Sris practised in Meerut, most of the leading pleaders of that place sent their appeals to him, for they had great faith in his ability, honesty and integrity. So did those of Bareilly also, where he had served as Munsif two years previously. These two places supplied him with the greater portion of his professional work at Allahabad. From Saharanpur also he used to get a fair amount of work.

On the return of Baman Das to India in 1891, Sris had no opportunity of seeing and talking with him for any length of time till he went to Ahmednagar in October 1891, where his brother was then posted. They lived together for some days, and as there were no other family members present there, they talked very freely on different subjects. They travelled together to Aurangabad, Daulatabad and Ellora. As there was no railway to those places then, they performed their journey in a *tonga*. Their conversation turning to Indian history, Sris told his brother that the Indian history written



by the Britishers was not to be relied upon and it was desirable that it, especially the British period of it, should be written by Indians. This suggestion appealed to his brother, who devoted his leisure hours to the study of Indian history. His brother's *Rise of the Christian Power in India* in five volumes was the result of the suggestion made by Sris Chandra.

The idea of publishing the *Sacred Books of the Hindus* also originated with Sris Chandra and his brother became the general editor of that series.

When his brother Baman Das returned from England on securing a post in the I.M.S., Sris Chandra wrote to him thus :

21st April, 1891.

My dear Baman,

Received your telegram and card. Happy to hear of your safe arrival. You can put up at the Prarthana Samaj mandir, Girgaum, Bombay, with Mr. Sada Shiva Kelkar, Brahmo missionary, to whom our friend Mr. Lachunan Prasad had written to receive you. He will make you perfectly comfortable.

Mr. Jivan Singh was here for the last four days and left Allahabad yesterday for Peshawar, where he has got an officiating charge.

We are all well. Taran is expected here to-day, I hope you are well.

Yours  
Sris Ch. Bose.

#### INDIAN GIRLS' FREE SCHOOL

The leap year (1888) was eventful in the life of Sris Chandra. On the New Year's day was established the Indian Girls' Free High School. It literally started from

his house. In the establishment of this school, he was greatly helped by Babu Charu Chandra Mitra, the Vice-Chairman of the Allahabad Municipality, who secured from the Municipality a monthly grant of Rs. 100 for this school.

How easily myths are propagated in India and fiction takes the place of fact is illustrated by certain persons entertaining the opinion that the Indian Girls' Free High School was not founded by Sris Chandra, but by Mr. Roshan Lal, Barrister-at-law and his wife. The school was established, as has been said before, on the 1st January 1888, when Mr. Roshan Lal was not married to the widowed daughter of Rai Bahadur Kanhaya Lal, Executive Engineer of Lahore, and sister of Lala Sewa Ram, Barrister-at-Law. The latter was a class-fellow in the school with Sris and was his friend as long as he lived. He went to England to study for the Bar and took with him his wife and widowed sister. Mr. Roshan Lal had preceded them to England, where he fell in love with Sewa Ram's sister, whom he married some time after he had settled in Allahabad as Advocate of the High Court. He had no hand in the foundation of the Girls' School, which he joined some time after its establishment and later on was its Secretary as long as he practised in Allahabad.

At that time, female education was not popular with the Indian community of Allahabad. There was only one girls' school in Allahabad, conducted by the Christian American women and known as American Zenana Mission (now called Central Girls') School. The ulterior motive of

the school was to convert "heathen" women to Christianity. It was necessary to stop this by establishing a school where Christianity would not form part of the education of the Indian girls. Female education was not then popular in the Upper Gangetic Valley and it was uphill work for Sris to raise funds and establish the school. Sris Chandra's idea was to make it a High School for girls, but it was not realised.

The Hon'ble Pandit Ajodhya Nath, the leader of the Vakil Bar, Allahabad High Court, was a new convert to the Congress creed. He had started a daily paper in Allahabad, called the *Indian Herald*, and had brought out Mr. Marion Crawford, the well-known novelist, from England to edit it. It was a counter-part of *The Pioneer*, and its policy was not pro-Indian, although it was owned by an Indian. No wonder, it was a failure and the owner had to stop its publication and to suffer a very heavy pecuniary loss. But he learnt the salutary lesson that it did not pay to go against the interests of his countrymen. He became an enthusiastic and ardent nationalist and exerted himself actively to make the Allahabad session (1888) of the Congress a great success. The Lieutenant-Governor of the province, Sir Auckland Colvin, taking his cue from Lord Dufferin, the Viceroy, was strongly opposed to the Congress. The Mussalmans, with their acknowledged leader, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, were persuaded by designing Anglo-Indians to keep themselves aloof from the Congress. *The Pioneer*, almost always anti-Indian, wrote vehemently against the Congress. So, very gloomy indeed seemed the prospects of the forthcoming session of the

Congress in Allahabad. But the redoubtable Pandit was not to be cowed down by the opposition. He rose equal to the occasion, marshalled his forces and flattered his Christian opponents by imitating their tactics.

In the beginning of 1888, an Anglo-Indian daily named the *Morning Post* was started in Allahabad by one Mr. Atkins, who was as bitter an Indian hater as it was possible for an Anglo-Indian in those days to be. In the Ilbert Bill controversy he joined the rabid Mr. Branson and others of his ilk and went to Great Britain to see that Lord Ripon did not succeed in his measure. But he was made to understand that there was no room in Allahabad for two dailies of the type of *The Pioneer*. The failure of the *Indian Herald* was due to the same cause. So the new Anglo-Indian daily espoused the cause of the Congress, and befriended the Indians.

At that time, the Anglo-Indian element was very strong in the Allahabad Bar. Mr. (afterwards Sir Walter) Colvin was the leader of the Bar. He was a brother of the Lieutenant-Governor. He could not go against his brother by joining the Congress. The other English Barristers also followed the policy. There was only one exception in the person of Mr. Howard. The influence of Mr. Ajodhya Nath on him was so great that he became conspicuous by joining the Congress.

#### SRIS AND HUME

It was necessary to make an impression on the large Anglo-Indian community of Allahabad that their interests did not clash with those of the Indians and so they

should not oppose, but join the Congress. So Mr. A. O. Hume had to visit Allahabad, and he delivered a lecture in a large meeting held in the Railway Theatre there on the 30th April, 1888, under the presidency of Mr. Howard. The choice of all fell on Sris Chandra to report Mr. Hume's speech. He gladly acceded to the request of Mr. Howard and Pandit Ajodhya Nath and reported Mr. Hume's speech. It was the first time that Sris Chandra met Hume in flesh and blood, although he was well known to him for half a dozen years previously.

Mr. Hume was so well pleased with the report, prepared by Sris, that he printed it *verbatim* without making any correction in it and sent a wire thanking Sris for his wonderfully accurate report of the speech.

This drew forth a pamphlet from the then Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, Sir Auckland Colvin, to which Mr. Hume wrote a rejoinder. The whole correspondence was published under the title of *Audi alteram partem*. But Colvin took the credit for "finally having buffeted" Hume.\*

#### INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

The fourth session of the Indian National Congress was held at Allahabad in the last week of December 1888, and Sris's house was crowded with guests who came either as delegates or visitors to the Congress.

#### INDIAN NATIONAL SONGS AND LYRICS

Reference has already been made to the little pamphlet published by Sris under the name of *Indian National*

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\* Skrine's *An Indian Journalist*, p. 403.

*Songs and Lyrics.* It was wholly set in type by Sris's brother, who affixed Sris's name to two of the poems in it without his knowledge. The Press was a small one and had a very small collection of the particular type in which it was printed. Sris told his brother not to affix his name to any more poem of his in that collection compiled by him and published by Nathu Ram Nand.

The publisher forwarded a copy of this pamphlet to Mr. A. O. Hume, C. B., who after retiring from the Bengal Civil Service, was at that time living in Simla, and asked his permission to reprint and publish in tract form his article—"No Revelation Infallible," which had appeared in the *Theosophist* for April 1883. This permission was at first granted, but afterwards withdrawn, as Mr. Hume published the article himself under the title of "Tracts of the Times, No. I." It is thus reasonable to suppose that the Indian National Society and *Indian National Songs and Lyrics* influenced Hume in conceiving the idea of the Indian National Congress and writing his "Old Man's Hope" and "The Star in the East."

The Theosophical Society suggested the idea of the Indian National Society to Sris and so it is said to have done to Hume. Both of them were members of the Theosophical Society and Sris in the early eighties was held in high esteem by the other Theosophists, which was not a little due to the high opinion that was entertained of him by both Madame Blavatsky (who authorised him to admit persons to the Society without making them pay the entrance fee of ten rupees) and Colonel Olcott, as

will be gathered from his reference to him in his *Old Diary Leaves*. Mr. Hume as an ardent Theosophist himself in those days very closely watched the doings of Sris and so it is not improbable that he watched also the Indian National Society, an account of which appeared in *The Arya* for April 1883, of which he was a constant reader.

Sris Chandra exhorted the youth of India in the poem "India's heroes rise." Nowadays, there is a general talk about the Youth Movement in India. But here we find Sris Chandra pioneering that movement in the eighties of the last century.

The place of honour in this *Indian National Songs and Lyrics* was given to a National song translated by Babu Raj Narain Bose. It runs thus:

"Ye sons of Ind ! her glory sing  
With hearts responsive to the string.  
What land beneath the sun like India gleams ?  
What mount is like her mount of snow ;  
Hers are the kindest soil, the purest streams  
And mines where rarest jewels glow.

Glory be to Ind !  
Glory lo ! to Ind !  
Glory sing of Ind !  
With a fearless heart,  
With a master's art,  
Glory sing of Ind !

Surpassing fair and chaste are India's dames ;  
Where are their equals to be found

Of Sita, Sabitri—those holy names  
For matchless constancy renowned ?

Glory be to Ind !

Glory lo ! to Ind ! etc., etc.

Before our vision India's sages great  
Vasistha, Gautam, Atri, pass,  
And bards, jewels of her fallen state,  
Rare Valmiki, Vyas and Kalidas.

Glory be to Ind !

Glory lo ! to Ind ! etc., etc.

4

The land of heroes she—oh ! where are they ?  
Subjection brought on sable night ;  
Though deep the gloom, will it for every stay ?  
The rising sun must cheer the sight.

Glory be to Ind !

Glory lo ! to Ind ! etc., etc.

5

Remember'st thou not Bhim or Arjun great,  
The valiant Prithu and the rest,  
The stays of Ind, the wicked Yavan's dread,  
The tender friends to men distrest ?

Glory be to Ind !

Glory lo ! to Ind ! etc., etc.

6

Why fearest thou, O craven ! Courage take :  
The righteous cause does victory grace ;  
Thou weak, know union thee will powerful make :  
What fear to cheer our mother's face :

Glory be to Ind !

Glory lo ! to Ind ! etc., etc.

*(Translated from the Bengali by Babu Raj Narain Bose)*



It has already been mentioned that some of the poems in the *Indian National Songs and Lyrics* were composed by Sris Chandra, in his early twenties. But he did not want to put his name to the poems written by him. When Sris Chandra had found out that his brother had affixed his name to two of the poems in that pamphlet without his knowledge, he asked his brother not to affix his name to any other poem of his. So we are in a position to know only about the two poems of Sris Chandra to which his name had been affixed. One of them is entitled—"Exhortation to India for Union" and the other one—"My Motherland." We quote them below :

*Exhortation to India for Union.*

Rise up, O Aryas, O Moslems arise ;  
 Ye Christians, ye Buddhists and Parsis arise :  
 Rise up Bengalees, Punjabees arise,  
 Mahrattas, Madrasis, Gujratis arise ;  
     Shake off all torpors' chain,  
     Break it with might and main,  
 Join ye like brothers in union's strong ties.

2

Ah ! long have we slept, sons of India, too long,  
 And daily wax weaker, while others grow strong  
 Your glory all faded, and perished your power,  
 And lower you sink still and lower each hour :  
 But still there is hope, if ye brothers unite.

3

Forget all your feuds and your quarrels forgive,  
 In love and in union let Indians all live ;  
 Advance ye in knowledge, in wisdom progress,  
 May science and art all your labour still bless !  
 Once more, so your banner shall wave in the skies.

Another poem included in that pamphlet is—"My Motherland." It reads as follows:

"My motherland, my motherland;  
Thou fairest of Almighty's hand,  
Where spring perpetual loves to stay  
And fragrant breezes constant play,  
Where nature in her gracious mood  
Unlaboured gives thy sons their food,  
O where on earth shall e'er we find  
A mother like thee, good and kind.

## 2

Thy starry nights so clear, serene,  
Thy forests wild—an awful scene,  
Thy mountains dressed in virgin snow  
Whence burdened rivers fitful flow,  
Moving in melodious strain  
And warble on from hill to plain,  
Till joining with the ocean wide  
Thy lands in fertile fields divide.

## 3

Thus all is fair and charming good  
Except thy sons—a worthless brood,  
All foolish, selfish, craven grown,  
A race of slaves for slavery born,  
No greatness in their souls I spy,  
No traces of their lineage high.  
To every stranger bowing head  
They barter honor for their bread.

## 4

Are they thy sons and dare they trace  
Their ancestry to that brave race,  
The race of fiery Sun and Moon,  
Whose glory like the God of noon

Refulgent shone through all the world;  
 Who victory's banner wide unfurled  
 From Himalaya to the sea?  
 Are they the sons of Aryan free?"

#### NECESSITY FOR SOCIAL REFORM

On the return of his brother Baman Das from England his mother was advised not to give shelter to her England returned son in her house. She declined to accept the proffered advice of the so-called leaders of the Benga community. So the family was excommunicated. One should remember the inconsistencies of those leaders. They tolerated a Brahman of their community to keep Musalman women as concubines, to dine in European hotel and with Christians and eat beef and drink wine. They have not the moral courage to excommunicate such a Brahman. A Brahman could safely keep a widow as concubine and her illegitimate children move in society.

The hypocrisy and want of moral courage of the leaders of his community greatly pained Sris Chandra. There can be little or no progress of the Hindus unless they move with the times and put their house in order. There can be no social reform unless and until the caste system is done away with.

#### PANINI OFFICE

The PANINI OFFICE was established by Sris Chandra in November 1891. At first it was intended for publishing the *Astadhyayi* of Panini. It would have been closed in 1899 when that work was completely published, had not the translation of the *Siddhanta Kaumudi* been taken in

hand. It undertook the publication of other works, to make itself self-supporting, which it was not with the publication of the *Astadhyayi*.

The PANINI OFFICE was meant to publish useful literature. So it published the Bengali and the English works of Raja Rammohun Roy, under the editorship of Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, who was at that time the Principal of the Kayastha Pathshala, Allahabad.

It has rendered valuable service by undertaking the publication of the *Sacred Books of the Hindus* series and *Syamacharan Sanskrit Series*, named after Sris Chandra's father Syamacharan Bose. It has also published the *Indian History Series* and reprinted several valuable works on Indian History and culture. Thus mention may be made of Max Muller's *History of Sanskrit Literature*.

When his brother Baman Das retired from service, he devoted his whole attention to the affairs of the Panini Office. By the publication of the *Sacred Books of the Hindus* and some historical books, the Panini office has endeared itself to all lovers of Sanskrit literature.

#### MAGH MELA

As long as Sris stayed in Allahabad he used to attend almost every day the Magh *mela*, held there from the middle of January to the middle of February every year. He visited the Sadhus and Sannyasis of note who assembled there with their numerous followers. As a student of *yoga*, he was greatly interested in witnessing the practices of the *yogis*—practices described in the *Hatha yoga*,

*Gheranda Samhita* and *Shiva Samhita*. It was in this way that he learnt the practical *yoga*.

There the different orders of the Hindu ascetics, Dasanamis, Dandins, Bairagis, Vaisnavas, Udasis, Nirmalis and others attracted his attention. The different sects and creeds of the Hindus represented in the Mela could not fail to interest a keen student of comparative religion in general and of Hindism in particular as Sris was. The Kumbha and Ardha-Kumbha melas are held every twelve and six years respectively in Allahabad, which exhibit the vitality of living Hinduism of India. Sris was so greatly impressed with the Mela, that he described it in the form of a story in *Saraswati*, published in the *Day in India* in 1889.

#### ARDHA KUMBHA MELA

There was an Ardha-Kumbha mela at Allahabad in 1888 in the months of January-February and a very large concourse of pilgrims attended it. Sris visited it very frequently and searched after Yogis and Sannyasis and learned Pandits to see yogic practices and learn about the Vedanta and Hindu religious thoughts from them. It was during this Mela that one Madrasi, who called himself Sriman Swami, visited Allahabad and posed as a champion of the poor cow and persuaded the simple-minded Hindus to subscribe to the fund, which he was raising, for preventing cow-slaughter by going to England and submitting in person to the Queen-Empress a Memorial signed by millions of Hindus. In this way, it was alleged that he raised a lakh of Rupees and then

decamped. He made the acquaintance of Sris and was a very frequent visitor to his house. Meghnath Banerjee, who had made it a point to attend every session of the Congress, wherever it was held, came to Allahabad in December 1888 and seeing Sriman Swami in Sris's house one day at once recognised him as the person who was called Deshikachari Baba in 1878 at Lahore, where at that time he was a medical student. This Deshikachari Baba *alias* Sriman Swami was a convict and was Her Majesty's guest for sometime in an Indian jail. *The Pioneer* not long afterwards published in detail his past history. After this exposure he considered it prudent to decamp from Allahabad, with a large sum of money in his pocket which he had got by false pretensions.†

SWAMI DURGANAND AND THE TRANSLATION OF  
THE GHERANDA SAMHITA

Sris Chandra made the acquaintance of Swami Durganand while at Meerut, who stayed at his house for some time and again visited him at Allahabad, where he was his guest. He was an adept in the performance of the different *asanas*, and other processes of the Hatha yoga, such as *Neti*, *Dhauti*, etc. He also professed that he could transmute base metals into noble ones. In the presence of some persons, he took a copper piece, which, melted with some substances, was made white, resembling silver; and the converted metal was found to be silvar by testing. Whether it was a trick by sleight of hand, was difficult to ascertain.

It was at his suggestion that Sris Chandra undertook to translate the *Gheranda Samhita*, which was first

printed by Mr. Tookaram Tatya of Bombay and afterwards reprinted in the *Sacred Books of the Hindus* series.

*JWALA PRASAD JHA*

When Sris Chandra commenced his practice at Meerut, Mr. Jwala Prasad Jha was the Munsarim of the Judge's Court there. He was also a Fellow of the Theosophical Society. So Sris made his acquaintance at Meerut, from where he was promoted to Munsifship. He was Munsif of Benares when Sris was transferred there in 1896. It was a great pleasure to meet his old friend of Meerut. Mr. Jwala Prasad was greatly interested in Light Cure. He had written a pamphlet on this treatment. The MS. was submitted by him to Sris and his brother for revision. After revision it was published under the title of *Chromopathy*. The publication created great sensation. A leading Anglo-Indian daily very adversely criticised it and recommended the lodgment of its writer in a lunatic asylum. But to the credit of that Anglo-Indian journal, it must be said that it expressed regret for what it had written when a year or two afterwards Finsen's Light Treatment was made known.

Mr. Jwala Prasad claimed to have cured many severe maladies with chromopathy and while at Benares his residence was crowded with patients seeking relief at his hands for their ailments.

He also practised Mesmerism for the cure of diseases. In this he followed the example of Colonel Olcott rather than that of Dr. Esdaile.

He and Sris served together for a few months only at

Benares, from where he was transferred to Mahaban, where he died in 1898.

He was in the habit of having correspondence with Sris. In his letter of 25th June 1896, he wrote to Sris Chandra :

"I indeed feel very happy to see you here (Benares), for we are old friends—and we will pass a jolly time of our stay here.

Yes, the Headquarters of the Indian section (of the Theosophical Society) are here. It is also a good thing.....

Yes, you are also coming here at a very good juncture. Besant and others are returning to Benares on 1st February next and will remain here till the 20th February. So we will have ample time to see them before they go away."

In the same letter he referred to his book on Chromopathy thus :

"I am writing a short pamphlet in English on Colour Treatment, and I hope to finish it by the end of February. I have written almost half of it."

When he was transferred to Mahaban he wrote to his friend on 25th November 1896 thus :

"I am the only devil who can enjoy everything. I am here alone—none to talk to—no one to sit by : jungle all around, and still I feel happy—more so than when I was at Benares."

About his literary work, he wrote in the same letter :

"Although I am working hard in office, as hard as anything, yet still I find time to write out these stories. They are very instructive to young boys. I have made up my mind to write as many stories as I can during one year, put them in print, sell them and distribute them as I have done my Chromopathy."

*SIR GEORGE KNOX*

Sir George Knox was a member of the Indian Civil Service, who joined it in 1865. During the long period



of his service extending over 55 years, he was absent from duty on leave for one day only. It was a record which was not beaten by any other member of the Indian Civil Service.

When he was elevated to the High Court Bench of Allahabad in 1890, Sris was in practice. Knox had studied Sanskrit at the feet of Goldstucker in the University College, London. He had a high opinion of Sris' Sanskrit scholarship and there was hardly any case on Hindu Law before him in which he did not consult Sris. One of his sons was preparing for the I. C. S. Examination with Sanskrit as one of his subjects for study. He asked Sris to coach him. We shall have occasion to refer to Sir George Knox later on.

*RAI BAHADUR DR. GYANENDRA NATH CHAKRAVARTI*

Babu Gyanendra Nath Chakravarti belonged to the U. P. Educational Service. He attended the Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in 1893. Of the Indians who attended it, Swami Vivekananda made the most profound impression on the audience. Several American ladies and gentlemen became his followers and helped him to establish a Lodge of his Order in America.

Some time after his return from America, Babu Gyanendra Nath lost his wife and was very desolate. Rai Bahadur Gagan Chandra Roy, who was on the look out for a suitable bridegroom for his only daughter, asked Sris Chandra, who knew Gyanendra Babu well, to negotiate the marriage of his daughter with Gyan Rabu, who, although he hesitated at first to remarry, was persuaded by

Sris to reconsider his opinion and ultimately marry. He wrote thus to Sris on the question of his remarriage :

"It is true that I lost my wife about a couple of months ago. You know I have a warm and loyal nature, and I have felt so completely stunned by the wrench that I have not had the heart to think of my future. The question of my leading a married life again is yet left undetermined, although I must confess I am feeling dreadfully alone and desolate."

At last the marriage was settled by Sris. The union has been a happy one and Gagan Babu's wife always expressed her gratitude to Sris for his successful negotiation.

Dr. G. N. Chakravarti thus writes about his friend Sris Chandra :

"It is difficult for me even at this distant date to speak without emotion of the qualities of head and heart of my late friend Rai Bahadur Sris Chandra Basu, who retired as Judge in the United Provinces. Our relations were so intimate that in his passing away I feel that I have lost a brother whose place it has not been possible to supply all these years. Of his public life and of his vast and varied erudition it is needless for me to speak. The large number of works which bear his name as author testify to his intellectual ability and versatility. And it is well known that he was one of the most scholarly judges that ever sat on the bench. I can, however, add my feeble voice to the numerous encomiums that you are likely to have on the richness and warmth of his heart. I am getting old myself (28th Jan. 1926) : but in my whole life time I have never come across any one who retained in old age all the freshness, simplicity and charm of child nature. It is no exaggeration to say that Rai Bahadur Sris Chandra Basu was the friend of all and enemy of none, for he never entertained any feeling of suspicion or ill-will towards any one who came into contact with him. Indeed,

he had no time to give any attention to the petty animosities that make an ugly blot on our social life. All the energy, and all the time that he had were given to the service of his fellow men, and his mind was so full of high spiritual ideals as to leave no room for petty jealousies which mar the grandeur of human life."

#### BHUVANESWARI ASHRAMA

As has already been mentioned, his brother returned from England in April 1891 and this enabled Sris to breathe, as it were, more freely. He thought it his duty to show his appreciation in some tangible form of all that his mother sacrificed, suffered and did for him. He purchased a house on the Grand Trunk Road in the heart of the town and dedicated it to his mother and named it *Bhuvaneshwari Ashrama*.

#### ASTADHYAYI OF PANINI

In November 1891, Sris brought out the first fasciculus of the *Astadhyayi* of Panini. It was printed in the Indian Press, owned by Babu Chintamani Ghosh, who was then making his name by the high class printing executed by him. The excellent get-up and neat printing reflected great credit on the Indian Press.

As the book began to be published, it attracted the attention of several orientalisists in Europe and America. Several letters of appreciation were received from many eminent Sanskrit scholars. We quote below a letter from Dr. Whitney written from New Haven, U. S. A., on the 17th June 1893, to the Manager of the Indian Press :

"I have received your favour of April 6th, and also the copy of the first book of Panini, which you were so kind as to send me. I

beg to return my best thanks for the same. The work seems to me to be very well planned and executed, doing credit to the translator and publisher. It is also, in my opinion, very valuable, undertaking, as it does, to give the European student of the native grammar more help than he can find anywhere else. It ought to have a good sale in Europe (and correspondingly in America).....

Yours sincerely  
W. D. Whitney."

*The Astadhyayi* of Panini was complete in 1682 pages. It contains the Sanskrit Sutras and Vrittis with notes and explanations in English, based on the celebrated commentary called the *Kasika*. It will serve as a monument to his deep knowledge of Sanskrit and his untiring labour and perseverance. Many other great Sanskrit scholars praised his great work on Panini in terms of highest appreciation. Even the orthodox Sanskrit pandits of Benares and other great centres of learning bestowed high praise on him. It is really a wonder how Sris Chandra managed to work at Panini and translate the big volume containing 1682 pages, after his hard labour as a Munsif in the Court. It is surprising how he could find so much time to learn Sanskrit and translate such a monumental work amidst his judicial duties.

The Right Hon'ble F. Max Muller thus congratulated him in a letter dated 30th April, 1896 :

".....Allow me to congratulate you on your successful termination of Panini's Grammar. It was a great undertaking, and you have done your part of the work most admirably. I say once more what should I have given for such an edition of Panini when I was young, and how much time would it have saved me

and others. Whatever people may say, no one knows Sanskrit who does not know Panini."

Professor T. Jolly, Ph. D., Wurzburg (Germany), thus wrote on 23rd April, 1893 :

".....Nothing could have been more gratifying to me, no doubt, than to get hold of a trustworthy translation of Panini's *Astadhyayi*, the standard work of Sanskrit literature, and I shall gladly do my best to make this valuable work known to lovers and students of the immortal literature of ancient India in this country."

Professor V. Fausbol also thus wrote from Copenhagen on 15th June, 1893 :

".....It appears to me to be a splendid production of Indian industry and scholarship and I value it particularly on account of the extracts from the *Kasika*."

Professor Dr. R. Pischle, Halle (Saals), wrote thus on the 27th May, 1893 :

".....I have gone through it and find it an extremely valuable and useful book, all the more so as there are very few Sanskrit scholars in Europe who understand Panini."

#### *SIDDHANTA KAUMUDI*

Another great work of Sris Chandra undertaken by the Panini office was *Siddhanta Kaumudi*. It was a companion volume to his *Astadhyayi* of Panini and is a testimony to his deep knowledge of Sanskrit. A leading Indian paper noticed this work in the following terms :

"The next great undertaking of the Panini office was the publication of the *Siddhanta Kaumudi* of Bhattoji Diksita. This is a standard work on Sanskrit Grammar, and Sanskrit scholars spend at least a dozen years in mastering its intricacies.....It may be mentioned that the Oriental Translation Fund of England

advertised about three quarters of a century ago as under preparation the English translation of the *Siddhanta Kaumudi* by Professor Horace Hayman Wilson. But perhaps he found the work too laborious for him, for the advertised translation was never published."

Professor Louis de la Vallee Poussain, Professor at Ghent, thus wrote about this monumental work :

"I have duly received the first volume of your *Siddhanta Kaumudi*. I was much pleased to get such a nice present from you. I have no hesitation to confess that I found inextricable difficulties in the use of Bothlingk's *Panini* before I was so fortunate as to obtain from my friend--a spare copy he had of your *Astadhyayi*. It is a capital book for reference, and the *Siddhanta Kaumudi* for study."

Swami Ram Misra Sastri thus wrote an appreciation of *Astadhyayi* of Panini on the 3rd February, 1899 :

"I was much pleased to receive a copy of the fourth volume of the translation of Panini by Babu Sris Chandra Basu, Munsif, Benares. It is very rare that one of the officials in the Government employ can spare sufficient time from his office work, and then devote it for doing some good to the public. In this respect Babu Sris Chandra Basu stands foremost. The translation of the Panini Sutras is so very clear and vivid that even those who have a little knowledge of the Sanskrit language, can fully comprehend the meaning of the Sutras. I hope our Indian Government, which always honours the learned, and the Rajas, Maharajas and other Rases of our country will give every encouragement to the author for his laborious and useful work. I am sure the author will attain the same success in the whole of his work, as he has been able to achieve in the present volume."

Swami Vivekananda was then in America. He wanted a copy of Sris Chandra's *Astadhyayi* of Panini. So

Swami Ramkrishnananda wrote to Sris Chandra from Alambazar Math, Baranagore, Calcutta, on 26th Dec, 1895 :

"You have already got a letter from one of my brothers, Swami Jogananda, requesting you to send a copy of your Panini's Translation to Swami Vivekananda in America. This my present letter is simply a reminder of the above letter. I hope that you will not deny us the favour of sending a copy of your translation to our Math, which we will send over to America to the Swami."

#### *WHY SRIS CHANDRA LEFT THE BAR*

When Sris Chandra left the Bar, he had already earned some reputation and was rising in his profession. There was no necessity for him to seek employment as a Munsiff. But he did so, after the return of his brother Baman Das from England. He wanted to complete Panini's Grammar, which he could not do amidst the distractions of practice. Remembering that no great cause has ever been achieved without sacrifice, he considered the revival and conservation of the ancient Sanskrit learning more important than making money by the practice of his profession. He, therefore, did not hesitate to sacrifice his professional career. He had become somewhat disgusted also with the profession, for he used to say that "no action can lie unless the parties lie." There was pun in the word "lie." For a man of his philosophical temperament and retired habits, the means which some of the members of the Bar were using to rise in the profession were revolting. Touts were engaged and commissions were given to pleaders in the mofussil to secure briefs. These evil practices were

somewhat lessened afterwards, but not at the time when he practised in the High Court.

The Bengali community of Allahabad excommunicated him and his family, because his brother after his return from England was taken back in the family. They were subjected to petty persecutions. Marriage could not be arranged for his neice (sister's daughter) in Allahabad. This also had some share in influencing him to leave Allahabad for some time at least.

*SRIS CHANDRA NOT AN UPSTART*

Sris Chandra was not an upstart. Hence he insisted on all round culture. It is easy for an upstart to make use of any means, to gain his object and kick the ladder by which he has risen and make money. Such was not the case with Sris Chandra. He shunned advertising himself or being always in the lime light. Therefore, very few people knew his worth or of his services rendered to his country and nation.

*UNITED STATES OF INDIA*

As far back as 1884, in the *Regenerator of Aryavarta*, a weekly journal published at Lahore and at that time edited by Mr. R. C. Bary, Sris Chandra wrote that the best way of doing away with provinces, should be to have a United States of India.



## CHAPTER VIII

### *SRISH CHANDRA IN SERVICE*

The month of April of 1892 was another turning point in Sris Chandra's life, when he threw up the practice of his profession and entered service as a Munsif. He did it at a great sacrifice. The writer of the life-sketch of Sris Chandra in *The Pioneer* writes thus (22nd December 1912) :

"But he (Sris) found that he could not complete the self-imposed task, *i. e.*, the translation of *Astadhyayi of Panini*, satisfactorily, as the practice of his profession stood in the way of his doing so. Either he should give up Panini, or the practice of law. The edition of Panini, which he was bringing out, was meant to pave the way not only to the study of Hindu Law, but of all the higher branches of Sanskrit learning. Remembering that no great cause has ever been achieved without sacrifice, he gave up the practice of his profession and entered the Provincial Judicial Service to which the Government was pleased to appoint him at once as a second grade Munsif and posted him to Ghazipur. He joined the service on the 11th April 1892."

Sris Chandra, therefore, gave up his practice and entered the Government service. He was posted as a second grade Munsif at Ghazipur. He went over to Ghazipur and joined the service on the 11th April, 1892. He remained there up till February 1896, when he was transferred to Benares.

Ghazipur possessed an excellent Bengali colony, and it has produced Mr. Justice Lal Gopal Mukberjee, as well

as the poet Devendra Nath Sen, whose brothers, such as Mr. Justice Surendra Nath Sen, also were well known for their literary activities. It is also a sanatorium, noted for its rose water and opium factory. It can also boast of a Brahmo Samaj of the New Dispensation creed of Kesav Chandra Sen. Revd. P. C. Majumdar, Krishna Behari Sen, and Rabindranath Tagore and some of his family members often went there for recruiting their health.

The Bengali colony of Ghazipur at that time possessed many able persons. One of them was Rai Bahadur Gagan Chandra Roy, now living in retirement at Benares Cantonment. He was an institution there. His wife was born and brought up in the Punjab. She knew Sris Chandra's family well and called Sris' mother as her mother and so looked upon Sris as her younger brother. She was always very grateful to him for his negotiating and bringing about the marriage of her daughter with Rai Bahadur Dr. G. N. Chakravarti (formerly of the U. P. Educational Service and Vice-Chancellor of the Lucknow University). The marriage took place at Ghazipur and among the invited guests were Mrs. Annie Besant, Mr. Tookaram Tatya and Pandit Aditya Ram Bhattacharya.

Swami Vijnanananda was then in service at Ghazipur and was known as Babu Hari Prasanna Chatterjee. The people who frequently visited him included Rai Bahadur Gagan Chandra Roy, Babu Ishan Chandra Mukherjee and his son, Babu Satish Chandra Mukherjee and other leading members of the Bengali community there, such as, Rai Bahadur Jagadish Chatterjee as well as some members of the

Brahmo Samaj. In his house also stayed men like Swami Subodhananda, Swami Abhedananda, Swami Nirmalananda, and Swami Niranjanananda of Shri Ram Krishna Paramhansa Deva's Alambazar Math, Baranagore, Calcutta. He dictated the sayings of Shri Ram Krishna Deva to Swami Abhedananda, which were printed in the *Brahma-radha* of Madras, from which they were revised and published by Max Müller. He was always busy with studies of religion. In his house, there was no other subject discussed than that of religion.

While at Ghazipur, Sris Chandra "had to try a very complicated case of Mahomedan Law. Can the Wahabis pray in the same mosque with the Sunnis? That was the dispute between the litigant parties who sought justice at his hands. Extensive reading of almost the whole literature of Mahomedan jurisprudence in the original Arabic—for which he had to get books published outside India, in Mahomedan countries such as Egypt and Persia,—took him nearly a year to decide this important case. It is a decision which is of great value to Indian lawyers, for it has settled, once for all, a very moot point of Mahomedan Law." (*The Pioneer*, 22nd Dec. 1912).

In the beginning of February 1896 Sris Chandra was transferred from Ghazipur to Benares. His friends of Ghazipur became very sorry for that. One of his friends thus wrote to him from Ghazipur on the 19th February, 1896 :

"I am extremely sorry I could not see you on my return from Nowgong on the 3rd February '96. I heard of your transfer to Benares while at Allahabad. You have indeed got a good place,

but have made this place a desert. I really feel your absence. I have given up going to Gorabazar side. I had a mind to be introduced to your younger (brother), who as expressed by Satya Babu is a man worth to be mixed with and to have friendship with. I went to yours several times for this purpose, but unfortunately was disappointed in all my attempts."

Another friend of his, Babu Ishan Chandra Mukerjee, expressed himself thus in a letter dated the 28th July 1896 :

"I have returned to Ghazipur, but what a pity not to you. It is no good making friends with birds of passage like you, for you are one day here and 100 miles off the next day. I miss you so much and the good Rai Sahib, I mean the Sub-Judge. I have received your valuable present, namely, your translation of the *Gheranda Samhita*. I have read your introduction with great interest. It is very well written and you have explained very lucidly what is called the *Hatha Yoga*. I had no idea of what this *Yoga* was, and your book will be of great help to me. I return the compliment by sending you a copy of my "*Achar*" just published."

SRIS CHANDRA AT BENARES (Feb. 1896-Oct. 1901)

Sris Chandra was transferred to the holy city of Benares in the beginning of 1896. In this centre of Sanskrit learning, Sris wanted to complete the translation of Panini. Fortunately, he found here a good prospect of completing the translation and publication of Panini's great grammar. The great work was completed towards the end of the year 1898. It was on the successful termination of this great work that Prof. Max Müller sent his congratulations to Sris Chandra in the warmest language. The 'great orientalist wrote thus :

"Allow me to congratulate you on your successful termination of Panini's Grammar. It was a great undertaking, and you have done your part of the work admirably."

*The Pioneer* wrote thus on the 22nd Dec. 1912 :

"A portion of this work has been prescribed as a text book in the M. A. Examination of the London University. It is the only instance of an Indian author's work finding a place in the curriculum of studies in the highest examination of an European University."

Sris Chandra met his old friend Pandit Jwala Prasad in Benares.

#### THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

It has already been mentioned that Sris Chandra was a staunch Theosophist. He had helped in the establishment of the Lahore Theosophical Society. He was delighted to come to Benares, the headquarters of the Indian section of the Theosophical Society.

The Theosophical Society was founded by Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott in 1875. It was established in New York and its name was not known outside America. When Dayananda Saraswati was in Lahore in 1877, the Arya Samaj was making itself known not only in India, but in Europe and America also. When the founders of the Theosophical Society heard of it, they opened communication with the Swami and shortly afterwards came to Bombay, which they made the headquarters of the Society. *The Theosophist* as a monthly began to be published from October 1879. Both the founders visited the Punjab in 1880. At first they went to Simla, where they made the acquaintance of Mr. A. O. Hume, who had

just retired from the Bengal Civil Service and settled in Simla, as well as that of Mr. S. P. Sinnet, the Editor of *The Pioneer*, the well known Anglo-Indian daily of Allahabad. Both the above-named gentlemen joined the Society and so they were towers of strength to the movement in India.

From Simla, the two founders of the Society proceeded to Amritsar in November of that year and subsequently to Lahore. Sris Chandra, who took great interest in Theosophy, went to Amritsar with his friend, Lala Ratan Chand Bary, to meet Blavatsky and Olcott. Sris Chandra was then a college student in the fourth year class and had to appear at the B. A. Examination in the month of January next. He had already had to neglect his studies for some months previously for the part he played in the Students' Rebellion at the college; and now he was again neglecting his studies in search of the Mahatmas and occult phenomena.

The intelligence and inquisitive nature of Sris Chandra made a deep impression on both the founders, who had known him previously by reputation as the Editor of Sabhapaty Swami's treatise on the Raj Yoga Philosophy.

The objects for which the Theosophical Society was established, appealed to Sris Chandra and he joined it. He was a great favourite of both the founders and as long as they lived they kept correspondence with him. He was authorised by Madame Blavatsky to admit Fellows to the Society without demanding any fee from them, and her letter of authority runs thus:

"Secretary's Office of the Theosophical Society,  
Breach Candy, Bombay, India  
May 22, 1881

I hereby give to Babu Sris Chandra Basu full discretionary power to accept as members of our Theosophical Society, and initiate them to the pass words, grip and signs, exempting them at the same time from the initiation fees (of Rs 10)—all such applicants as he considers and knows to be too poor to pay the same. In the meanwhile, Babu Sris Chandra Basu is expected to send the full names of such applicants to the office of the Theosophical Headquarters, at Bombay, to the address of the Corresponding Secretary.

H. P. Blavatsky  
Corresponding Secretary of the T. S. and Founder."

The diploma of his Fellowship bears the date of October 30, 1881.

When his introduction to Yoga Philosophy with the Translation of the *Shiva Samhita*, which was the first Tantrik work translated into English, was published in 1887 by Mr. Hiralal Dhole of Calcutta, it was dedicated to Colonel Olcott. Wherever Sris Chandra served, he established a branch of the Theosophical Society there and tried to enlist the sympathy of the Muhammadans also in this movement.

But his unselfish devotion to the cause of the Theosophical Society increased from 1896, when he was posted at Benares, which had just been made the Headquarters of the Indian section of the Theosophical Society. Mrs. Besant came to reside at Benares. He reported her speeches and discourses in shorthand and thus made her views widely known in India and other

countries of the world. Mrs. Besant thus appreciated the help rendered by Sris Chandra when she said:

"I am indebted to Babu Srish Chandra Basu, Munsif of Benares, for the wonderfully accurate report which he most kindly took of the discourses. I have been reported by the best London men, but have never sent a report to the Press with less corrections than that supplied by my amateur friend."

It grieved him greatly when Mrs. Besant commenced to meddle in Indian politics and subscribed (at that time) more or less to the shibboleths of the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy regarding India. She founded an *Order of the Sons of India*, because a few Indian youths had taken to the cult of the bomb, which very probably a passage in *The Pioneer*, practically extenuating the assassination of M. Stolypin, the Russian premier, put into their heads. What *The Pioneer* wrote in its issue of August 29, 1906 cannot be printed now.

Within a couple of years after that passage had appeared in the editorial columns of *The Pioneer* the first bomb outrage took place in India.

But when an Englishman in India murders a poor native of this country, no one moves to establish an *Order of the Sons of Anglo-India*.

Mrs. Besant's politics became more pro-India afterwards.

Mrs. Besant was the President of the Theosophical Society and her taking part in politics seemed to Sris Chandra to compromise those members of the Theosophical Society who were Government servants and as such by the Rules of the Service were prevented from joining any political movement. He wrote about it to Mrs. Besant.



Her reply is given below. In her letter dated "Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras S. January 16, 1915," Mrs. Besant wrote to Sris Chandra :

"You cannot, while a judge, work with me in politics. None of our judges or Government servants do. And the more they work as F. T. S. at other things, the more they prove what I am always saying, that T. S. is neutral in politics."

When Sris Chandra was ill in December 1915, Mrs. Besant visited Allahabad, but she never came to see Sris Chandra, although she passed by the house in which she had been several times his honoured guest. Then again during his last fatal illness, although she came once or twice to Allahabad, she did not visit him or make inquiries regarding his health.

Sris Chandra had a very poor opinion of Theosophists of British birth. Their profession of universal brotherhood seemed to him lip-deep, for they did not rise superior to their prejudices against Indians, whom they considered an inferior race and a conquered people, and they could not be expected to sympathise with their political aspirations.

*SRIS CHANDRA IN BENARES (1896)*

Benares is the epitome of Hindu India. Its population is made up of the Hindus of the different provinces of India, consisting of the various sects into which they are divided. The Bengalis, the Panjabis, the Mahrattas, the Gujratis, the Madrasis are well represented in Benares ;—most of them have their particular quarters there. Like Rome, it is the Eternal City of the Hindus, and being the seat of Sanskrit learning, it is called the Oxford of India.

It is the city of the goddess *Anna Purna*, where no Brahman need die of starvation, considering the number of charitable institutions there meant to feed Brahmans. Every well-to-do and pious Hindu of either sex considers it a meritorious act to establish an *Anna Chhatra* अन्नशत्र in Benares. Of course, this indiscriminate charity is very often abused and misused.

But there is the dark side also of Benares. It is summed up in the following Hindi couplet :

रादं सादं सिदि संन्यासी  
इन से बचे तो बसे काशी ॥

Women of loose character, bulls, (Brahmany bulls let loose by the pious Hindus), and ascetics or vagabonds who as idle fellows are tempted by Satan to commit mischief, frequent Benares in such large numbers that they are a pest for whom one cannot live in peace there. The river front of Benares is lined with long flights of steps constructed of stones which become so slippery that accidents are not uncommon to visitors and bathers.

In Christendom in the middle ages, the church was the asylum for cut-throats and criminals of all kinds, for it being the sanctuary was beyond the pale of law. So was Benares before the establishment of British rule in India, especially before it became a part of the British dominions by its cession by the Nawab-Vazir of Oudh. It was freely resorted to by undesirable persons of disreputable character. Hence, the well-known sarcastic Sanskrit saying :

येषां कापि गतिर्नोस्ति तेषां वाराणसी गतिः ।

The purport of this saying is that Benares is the resort of those who have no other left.

Criminals of all descriptions also crowd in large numbers in Benares. A few of them sincerely repenting of the evil deeds of their past lives become ascetics, Sadhus or Sanyasis, while others do so to impose on the public, and under the garb of sanctity, follow with a certain amount of impunity, their criminal occupations.

Sris Chandra's house was always the resort of Sadhus and Sanyasis. But in Benares seeing their nature he resolved and recorded in his Diary on New Year's Day of 1899 not to accommodate Sadhus and Sanyasis any longer. However, this resolution was only very partially given effect to. Sadhus and Sanyasis were welcome guests in his house even after 1897.

Sris Chandra took advantage of his situation in Benares to devote his leisure hours to the study of Sanskrit literature in all its branches, for which purpose he kept a Pandit who lived in his house and was a constant attendant on him. This enabled him to complete the *Astadhyayi* of Panini and to print and publish it. With the help of some of the learned Pandits of Benares, he studied the Upanishads and the Vedanta and other schools of Hindu Philosophy.

By observing the rites and ceremonies of the different sects and creeds of the Hindus of different provinces of India, he was enabled to prepare his well-known

works—*A Catechism of Hindu Dharma* and the *Daily Practice of the Hindus*.

Mr. G. N. Chakravarti's marriage at Ghazipur in January 1896 was the occasion of Sris Chandra's acquaintance with Mrs. Besant and Mr. Upendra Nath Basu, with whom, within a month of his acquaintance, he was associated in work for the Theosophical Society.

Mr. Tookaram Tatya of Bombay had published one of Sris Chandra's books and they knew each other by correspondence. But Chakravarti's marriage made Sris Chandra personally acquainted with that Bombay publisher, who was so pleased with Sris Chandra that he always afterwards called him his younger brother, addressed his mother as his mother, and the ladies of the family as his sisters.

#### BIRTH-CONTROL.

Sris Chandra thought that there was necessity for birth-control amongst the educated middle class of the country, who were too proud to beg or to dig, and whose keen struggle for existence ruined their health and caused premature death. The lower classes, with whom the question of unemployment is not so pressing as with the middle classes, need not practise birth-control. The study of Darwin's works and also of Malthus biased him in favour of birth-control. Mrs. Besant's publication on the *Law of Population* was also partly responsible for forming Sris Chandra's opinion. In one of his diaries there is an entry under date 29th January 1897, which showed that he intended to translate Mrs. Besant's pamphlet into the leading vernaculars of this country.

*BABU NIL MADHAV ROY*

When Sris Chandra was transferred to Benares in 1896, Babu Nil Madhava Roy was the Subordinate Judge there. He was a very jolly good man and addicted to the pleasures of the table. He was a Vaidya by caste and was connected with Keshab Chandra Sen and Pratap Chandra Majumdar of the Brahmo Samaj. The latter gentleman visited Benares in 1897, and Sris Chandra in his Diary noted thus:

"15th December, 1897. Dined at Sub-Judge's with P. C. Majumdar."

"16th December. Went with P. C. Majumdar to Theosophical Society...Dined at Sub-Judge's."

"20th December. P. C. Mazumdar addressed (the meeting) in Bengali. Started Kashi Bhajan Samaj."

*N. B.* Read from Scriptures. 2. Sing Bhajans of Christ, Kabir, Nanak, Chaitanya and Hafiz.

It is not known how long this Kashi Bhajan Samaj lasted. Perhaps it lasted as long as Sris Chandra served in Benares as Munsif.

Babu Upendra Nath Roy, Pleader, son of late Babu Nilmadhab Roy, Offg. District Judge, Benares, has given the following reminiscences:

"Hindi as Court language for the Province of U. P.

"This movement originally started at the house of late Babu Nilmadhab Roy at Benares on the suggestion of late Sris Chandra Basu in co-operation with the late Mahamahopadhyaya Pt. Sudhakar Dubey (Professor of Sanskrit, Queen's College, Benares) and the late Pt. Maharaj Narain Shivapuree (Deputy Magistrate, Benares). A deputation

of the aforesaid gentlemen waited upon Sir Anthony Macdonnell, who was then Lieutenant-Governor of our provinces. A dictation competition took place between Hindi and Urdu writers to ascertain whether Hindi could be written faster, in which Pt. Sudhakar Dubey was one of the competitors and Pt. Sudhakar Dubey in that competition showed that Hindi could be written out faster. Mr. T. D. Roy, (nephew of the late Babu Nilmadhab Roy) was also present in that competition."

*CENTRAL HINDU COLLEGE*

Srish Chandra was one of those who helped in the establishment of the Central Hindu College, Benares. Sir Anthony Macdonell was the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, as the United Provinces was then called, when this institution came into existence. He did not look with favour on its establishment. He did all he could to thwart it. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya did not join the Hindu College movement or lend his helping hand to it. It may be that he took his cue from Sir Anthony Macdonell. At that time there was a rumour that the Lieutenant-Governor had set the Pandit to work for the establishment of the Hindu Boarding House at Allahabad and name it after him, which would act as a counterpoise to the Hindu College movement, for the gentry who contributed donations under implicit official pressure to the Macdonell Hindu Boarding House would not be in a position to help with money the Hindu College. But when Mr. Malaviya undertook to establish the Hindu University at Benares, he could not do it without

capturing the Hindu College. Sris Chandra was opposed to handing over the College to Mr. Malaviya.

Mrs. Annie Besant was at that time somewhat unpopular with the educated Hindus. It may be that to regain some of her lost popularity, she made peace with Mr. Malaviya and advised the members of the Board of Trustees of the Hindu College to hand it over to the proposed Hindu University. Sris Chandra, finding that his opposition to it would be useless, very reluctantly gave his consent to it. But he greatly regretted it when he found the University becoming a stronghold of Brahman orthodoxy and a Brahmanical institution of a reactionary type.

The letter which Mrs. Besant addressed to her colleagues is reproduced below in full :

"Bombay  
21st April, 1911.

Dear Colleague,

You will see from the printed papers enclosed herewith that the amalgamation between the schemes of the Hon. Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya and my own—the desirability of which has been pressed upon us from all sides by the best friends of India for some time in view of the rapidly developing conditions—has been brought about. One important condition of the amalgamation, which needs your consideration individually and the sanction of the C. H. C. Board of Trustees collectively, is that the C. H. C. shall form the nucleus of the Hindu University of Benares, and that all its Funds and Properties shall be formally *vested* in the new University—but *in trust* for the C. H. C. itself, all the practical management of the Funds, etc., remaining in the hands of the present Board and Managing Committee, exactly as before. So, other colleges which gradually come into or are built up by

the new University, will have their funds *vested* in it, but earmarked and held in trust for each separately. The advantage of this is obvious. Workers and donors interested in the different colleges will each be able to collect or give donations for the college in which each is most interested, but in the name of the University, thus avoiding all appearance of opposition and all working together to build up the different parts of the one whole.

I therefore request your written consent to this vesting of the College Funds and Properties in the University of Benares in trust for the C. H. C., as said above. On receipt of your consent, of which I feel no doubt, since the advantages to both the college and the University are obvious, I shall have a draft resolution on the subject drawn up by our legal advisers and brought before a special meeting of the Board of Trustees, C. H. C. In raising funds for the University, friends of the College should earmark them as in Trust for the C. H. C.

Yours sincerely,  
Annie Besant,  
President.

NOTE.—Kindly send your answer to the Honorary Secretary, Board of Trustees, Central Hindu College, Benares, as the President will be out of India.”

Mrs. ANNIE BESANT

We have already spoken about Mrs. Annie Besant, who made the acquaintance of Mr. (now Rai Bahadur Dr.) G. N. Chakravarti (ex-Vice-Chancellor of the Lucknow University) in America in 1893, where both of them appeared before the Parliament of Religions as delegates of the Theosophical Society. She was invited to Ghazipur on the occasion of Mr. Chakrabarti's marriage in January 1896. A public lecture was delivered there by her on Theosophy. When Sris Chandra made her acquaintance at Ghazipur,



he did not know that he would be associated with her for nearly two decades in working for the Theosophical Society. Sris Chandra addressed Mrs. Besant as "Mother" and dedicated some of his publications to her.

We quote below one of her letters to Sris Chandra :

"82 Drayton Gardens  
London, S. W.  
July 12, 1912.

My dear son,

I thank you for your wise and affectionate letter. I am glad that some good has come out of evil. Could you not attend C. H. C. Committee Meetings and help to stop the persecution of our good workers ?

I would rather say nothing as to dear Bhagawan Das' statement that he never looked on me as his *guru*. He is a very valuable member, and I have no need to claim any one's respect. Where it is given, I respond ; where it is withheld, I am content. My dear, they who know the masters need no praise from lesser men.

I shall reach Benares, if all goes well, on September 7th. I shall be so glad to be at home again, for Benares is "home" to me as is no other place on earth save my master's *ashrama*.

With affection always,  
my dear good son,  
Annie Besant."

Another letter which Mrs. Besant wrote from the Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras S., on August 1, 1915 reads thus in part :

"My dear son,—I am very sorry to hear of your bad health. You should not do any meditation, of course....."

It has already been mentioned that the headquarters

of the Theosophical Society had been removed from Bombay to Adyar, Madras. It was afterwards considered necessary to transfer the headquarters of the Indian Section of the Society to Benares under the Joint-Secretaryship of Babu Upendra Nath Basu and Mr. Bertram Keightley. When Mrs. Annie Besant came out to India to make this country her home, she preferred Benares to Madras and settled at the holy city of the Hindus. The Society counted on the support of Rai Bahadur Pramada Das Mitra (the well-known Rais and Zamindar, an alumni of the Benares College, the Honorary Professor of English to the Sanskrit Department of that institution and translator of the *Sahitya Darpan* in English in the *Bibliotheca Indica* series of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta), and his sons and nephews, as well as of Babu Govinda Das and Bhagavan Das for its existence in the capital of the Hindu orthodoxy in India. There was already a branch of the Theosophical Society there, under the name of *Tattwa Sabha*. Mrs. Besant infused new life into this Society by delivering periodical discourses and lectures there. *Prasnottara* was the organ of this Society. Sris Chandra proved a tower of strength to the Society by taking down the lectures and discourses of Mrs. Besant in shorthand and transcribing and making fair copies of the same for publication in the *Prasnottara*. It was in this way that Sris proved of great service to the cause of Theosophy in India. *Catechism of Hinduism* from Sris Chandra's pen also appeared at first in the *Prasnottara* and so did also the *Daily Practice of the Hindus*.

The Convention of the Theosophical Society was held every alternate year at Benares. Sris Chandra had to report the proceedings of the Convention. He trained a gentleman, Babu Aghore Chandra Chatterjee by name, in shorthand so well, that he greatly helped him in this task. We have already quoted Dr. Besant's appreciation of the help rendered by Sris Chandra in this respect.

Reference has also been made to the fact how Sris Chandra joined wholeheartedly the movement for the establishment of the Central Hindu College at Benares. Mrs. Besant was the President of the College Committee and she brought out an English Theosophist named Dr. Richardson to act as Honorary Principal of the Hindu College. Some eighty years before was established the Hindu College at Calcutta and Captain Richardson was its Principal. So now his namesake was the Principal of the Benares Hindu College. Just as the Calcutta Hindu College led to the establishment of the Calcutta University, so did the Benares Hindu College, of the Benares Hindu University. But while the Calcutta College was for reform and progress all round, Sris Chandra regretted that the Hindu University of Benares was becoming more and more a Brahmanical institution and drifting towards Hindu orthodoxy.

#### *SRIS CHANDRA LEARNS FRENCH AND GERMAN*

Dr. Pascal, a Fellow of the Theosophical Society, was a medical practitioner of Toulon in France. He came out to India towards the close of 1898 and stayed at the Theosophical Society, Benares, till April, 1899. Sris used

to visit him almost daily to learn French. When Dr. Pascal left India he corresponded with him in French. Below is given a letter in French written by Sris Chandra to Dr. Pascal :

"Benares  
4th May, '99

Mon cher ami,

J'espère que vous êtes arrivé sans accident et en bonne santé dans votre patrie. Depuis votre départ de Bénarés, je trouve les Headquarters extrêmement insipides et sans vie.

Le Dr. Richardson, aussi va à Haridwar, la semaine, prochaine, parce que collège est fermé.

J'espère vous n'êtes pas fatigué de cette lettre. Je suis bien, mais je ressous la départ de toutes mes amis.

Fraternellement  
Sris Chandra Bose  
Munsif, Benares."

The following reply was received by Sris Chandra from Dr. Pascal :

"Toulon le 30 Mai, '99

Mon cher ami,

Je vous écris française pour aller plus vite ; je suis si occupé, depuis notre arrivée, que je n'ai pas eu un moment pour adresser à tous ces cœurs d'or que j'ai laissé à Bénarés, l'expression de mes plus cordiaux sentiments.

J'écirai à tous mes amis, à mesure que j'aurai un peu de temps ; mais dites-leur combien je les affectionne, et assurez leur que je ne les oublierai jamais,

Nous aurons à Paris en Septembre 1900 le *Congres de l'Humanite*, et vers la même époque un *Congres theosophique* et

un *Congres Spiritualiste*. Venez donc à l'Exposition et je serai heureux de vous revoir.

Nous allons former une *Section Française* bientôt, car le mouvement augmente rapidement en France. J'irai peut-être me fixer à Paris.

Votre petit souvenir, celui le votre frère, et celui de Lala Bajenath sont dans mes appartements ; ils me rappellent l'Inde, Bénarès et mes bons amis.

Je vous embrasse de tout

mon cœur

Dr. Ch. Pascal

When Sris was preparing the *Astadhyayi* of Panini MaxMüller recommended him to consult Bothlingk's Panini in German. He ordered the book from Germany, and to understand it, he learnt German. It was necessary for him to know German to understand the writings of German Sanskritists.

#### PAOHARI BABA

In the nineties of the last century, Ghazipur was famous for its well-known saint, Paohari Baba. He was not to be seen, but only to be heard. He was a recluse who confined himself in a house with all its doors and windows closed from inside. How he fed himself or attended to the calls of nature was a mystery. When many visitors crowded to his place, he would come to the outer door of his house and would answer their questions from behind the door locked or closed from within. So he was not visible, but audible.

In January 1896, on the occasion of the marriage of Rai Bahadur Gagan Chandra Roy's daughter with Mr.

Gyanendra Nath Chakravarti, Mr. Tookaram Tatya, the well-known publisher and philanthropist of Bombay was invited to witness the wedding. He was, however, the guest of Sris Chandra. Mohamahopadhyaya Pandit Adityaram Bhattacharya was also invited; he stayed in a bungalow. Sris, his brother and Tookaram went to see Pandit Adityaram, who as an orthodox Brahmin used to cook all his meals himself, in which operation he was engaged when the visitors called. That morning he was preparing *khichri*. He came out and talked with Tookaram for hardly ten minutes when a person came and told them that Paohari Baba was audible at that time. Hearing this all the four persons who were then conversing together, got up and ran as fast as they could to reach the Paohari Baba's place, which was at least half a mile from the spot where they were sitting. They had the satisfaction of hearing the Paohari Baba, who answered the questions put to him. After about half an hour's stay there, they returned. Pandit Adityaram said that he would have to go hungry that day, for the *khichri* which he had left over the fire must have been spoiled by being neglected so long. But to his great surprise, on his return, he found the fire had gone out, and the slow cooking had improved the taste of the *khichri* so well, that he declared that he had never tasted such delicious *khichri* before.

That was the only occasion that Sris Chandra heard Paohari Baba, who some time afterwards committed, it is alleged, suicide by setting fire to his house and thus burnt himself to death.

## RAMKRISHNA PARAMHANSÄ

A seeker after truth as Sris Chandra was, he tried to make the acquaintance of as many living saints of his time as possible. He was very sorry that he had no opportunity of meeting Ramkrishna Paramhansa in flesh and blood. But he knew intimately almost all his renowned disciples. Swami Vivekananda before he went to America was his guest for some time ; so were several others of his fellow monks. Swami Sivananda, the present head of the Belur Math, stayed with him for some months at Benares in 1896. Copies of some of his letters to Sris Chandra are reproduced in this volume :

"The Math  
Alambazar, Baranagore  
via Calcutta  
the 2nd October, '96

Dear Sris Chandra,

It is long since I have not had any news of you except once in the month of June. Perhaps I saw Jwala Prasad at Mogulsarai station on my way down to Bengal, who gave me some news of you and your younger brother's too. Where is he at present? How do you get on physically and mentally? Have you heard Swami Abhedananda's departure to England to teach Englishmen Vedanta Philosophy with new light shed upon it by Shri Guru Maharaj? Have you read the article "The Real Mahatman" by Prof. Max Muller in the *Nineteenth Century* of August? If you have not, I would request you to do it as soon as possible. It is written on the life of Guru Maharaj. He is "the Real Mahatman" of the learned Professor. In it there are a few select sayings of Guru Maharaj, translated by you. He has become the theme of talk amongst the Englishmen both at home

and abroad. I think you will feel yourself highly glad to hear all these--

My best love and blessings to you and Jwala Prasad.

Affly yours  
SIVANANDA."

Below we give another letter from Swami Ramkrishnananda of Alambazar Math, dated the 26th Dec. '95:

"I am altogether unable to account for your so long a silence. Are you so pressed in your business that you have no time even to take a passing notice of us by a single line or two in a post card? Or are you altogether disgusted with us? Has any one of us been the cause of your annoyance? Whatever may it be, I can not but intrude upon your valuable time relying upon your natural goodness and softness of character. You have already got a letter from one of my brothers, Swami Jogananda, requesting you to send a copy of your Panini's Translation to Swami Vivekananda in America. This my present letter is simply a reminder of the above letter. I hope that you will not deny us the favour of sending a copy of your translation to our Math, which we will send over to America to the Swamj. The birthday Mahotsab of our Sri Guru Maharaj is near at hand. I hope to see you here this year and join us in the festivity. You will not forget perhaps to send a bottle of rose water as usual for the use of our Sri Gurudeva. Hoping that this my letter will induce you to reply to me.

I remain  
Yours truly  
Sasi  
(Ramkrishnananda)"

In another letter Swami Ramkrishnananda wrote as follows from the Alambazar Math, Baranagore, on the 23rd Feb. 1896:



"My dear Sris Babu,

Last Sunday our great Mahotsav was performed with very grand success. Over 30,000 men gathered. About 10,000 men, rich and poor, were fed. Some 150 big amateur Sankirtan parties came. Three large steamers of Mersrs. Hoare Miller and Co. plied the whole day from Calcutta. Some speeches were also made. One by Mr. Dharmapala and another by Babu Jadu Nath Majumdar, M. A., Pleader, Jessore, and the Editor of the *Hindu Patrika*—on the work of Vivekananda. A third speech was delivered in Bengali by an able young man named Babu Annada Chandra Mitra.

Now we intend to conduct a Bengali fortnightly magazine. It will start very shortly. The main tenor of the paper shall be religion—Hinduism. The object of the magazine shall be to preach *Brahmacharyam* or self-denial and to prepare the rising generation for leading ideal house-hold life. The paper will be written in very simple style so that it might create an ardent taste in the mass of the people. Every issue will contain also the following special items:

1. Science translated. All sorts:
2. Western Philosophy, translated.
3. Ancient histories of the world, translated.
4. Travels.
5. Sanskrit. Sastras—translated.
6. Sanskrit Philosophy.
7. Miscellaneous.

We want to make the paper most possibly cheap. You know our labour is all free and we do not at all want to make profit by it, but to have a very large circulation. The size of the paper shall be Royal Octavo. The price annually we wish to make Re 1. But some experienced friends are advising to make it Rs. 2, otherwise, we shall have to sustain a great loss. We, however, have not yet settled, but taken the matter under consideration.

Swami Vivekananda has said that in Persian there are some ancient histories of India written; and that if we can procure the help of a Persian scholar to translate them into Bengali, it would be a very valuable item of the paper. Now, we have got no other friends knowing Persian but you. We hope, therefore, you would kindly translate such things from Persian into Bengali bit by bit and contribute them to our paper. We are now collecting materials for the paper for at least four months and then to start. We hope you would make no delay in doing the above. We know you are very badly busy with your versatile work. But please take this too upon you as one of your duties to these friends of yours. Our Namaskars to you.

Hoping you are doing well,

We are,

Yours truly,

Ramkrishnananda

and

Sivananda"

While he was serving as a Munsif at Benares, he was appointed by Bhinga Raja as one of the trustees of his Anathalaya or Orphanage.

It was at this time Rev. Anagarika Dharmapala of the Mahabodhi Society came to Benares and stayed at the house of Sris Chandra as his guest.

The publication of Sris Chandra's *Catechism of Hinduism* created great stir in the "high and dry" section of the Hindu society. An irate Mahamahopadhyaya declared that he would withdraw himself from the Board of Trustees of the Central Hindu College if Sris Chandra continued a member of the same.

## TRANSLATION OF THE VEDANTA SUTRAS

The little known commentary on the *Vedanta Sutas* by Vijnana-Bhiksu was procured by Sris Chandra and published at his expense in the Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series. Only one complete MS. was available and so it could not be collated and corrected.

It was the good fortune of Sris Chandra that he could study the Vedanta Sutas with a learned Vedantist. At Allahabad, there was a very learned Brahman whose knowledge of the Vedanta of Sankara's school was perhaps second to none at that time in India. He agreed to teach him the Vedanta Sutas on two conditions, namely :

First, he would not teach him directly, but two Brahman boys should be present, who would read and to whom the meaning of the Vedanta Sutas would be explained. Sris Chandra would hear and if he could not follow him and wanted further explanation of any passage or word, he would ask the Brahman boys about the same, to whom the Pandit would give the necessary explanation for his edification.

Secondly, he would not accept any payment in money for imparting the knowledge of the Vedanta.

## THE SACRED BOOKS OF THE HINDUS

For a long time, even in the nineties, Sris Chandra cherished a desire to translate the Upanishads, the six schools of Hindu Philosophy, Smritis and Puranas into English and place them within the easy reach of the educated public of India.

Where there is a will, there is a way. His dream to

publish the translations of the Upanishads, the six schools of Hindu orthodox Philosophy, some of the Smritis and the Puranas came to be realized when the Panini office undertook to publish the Series of the Sacred Books of the Hindus in 1909. The great difficulty was to obtain the co-operation of competent Sanskrit scholars in this great undertaking. Sris Chandra and his brother were not Brahmans and so the orthodox Brahmans, if not openly opposed, were not glad that this work should be undertaken by men of a caste inferior to them. A Bengali Brahman, an M. A. of the Calcutta University, declared that the Brahmans only had the right to read the Gita!

One Mahamahopadhyaya considered it at first beneath his dignity to associate himself with this undertaking, obviously because it was not conducted by persons of his caste. Another Brahmin Sanskrit scholar whose income every month reached four figures in Rupees, said that without the sight of money, he did not feel any inclination to work!

However, Sris Chandra translated the Upanishads, the Vedanta Sutras, the Mitakshara, Achara Adhyaya, while his son-in-law, Babu Nandalal Sinha, translated the Sankhya and Vaisesika Sutras, and his friend Mr. Ram Prasad, M. A., of Meerut translated the Yoga Sutras for the Series. The majority of the contributors to this series have been non-Brahmins.

Of course, in Sanskrit learning many a Mahamahopadhyaya and Professor of Sanskrit, notwithstanding their high-sounding titles, might have sat at the feet of the

non-Brahman Sris Chandra to learn lessons for years in almost every branch of Sanskrit learning.

Oriental scholars in different parts of the world have cordially welcomed the publication of the Sacred Books of the Hindus Series. Thus Dr. Jolly of the University of Wurzburg, Bavaria, wrote on the 18th October, 1909 :

"Dear Sir—I take a special interest in this new Series of the *Sacred Books of the Hindus*, trusting that it will be a success, such as Max Müller's Series of the Sacred Books of the East has been. Yours, I gather, is an essentially patriotic undertaking. It will help to promote the interest in things Indian, in Indian learning and Indian religion, both in your country and in Europe. The selection of works intended for translation appears to have been judiciously made, and the way in which the translation of Vol. I, containing the Upanisads, has been executed, does its author every credit. Being a student of Sanskrit law, I naturally take a particular interest in Vol. II, which is to contain an English version of Yajnavalkya Smṛiti and Mitaksara. I should feel obliged if you would send me a copy free, when Vol. II is out.

Yours faithfully,

J. Jolly,

Ph. D., Hon. Litt. D., Oxford."

#### HINDUISM—THE UNIVERSAL RELIGION

Sris Chandra believed in the potentiality of Hinduism becoming the universal religion. With this object in view, he prepared his Catechism of Hinduism. He laid great stress on the Tantras, because their study was neglected by modern Sanskrit scholars. According to him, Raja Ram Mohun Roy understood their importance in reforming the Hindu society of his time. The Tantras speak

of *Kaula* dharma. So Sris Chandra believed not in the brotherhood but in the familyhood of Man. As in a family circle, every individual has his or her place allotted in life, so would humanity if looked at as a large family. Of all the scriptures of the world, the Tantras alone teach this and hence their importance can not be overestimated.

Hinduism is a product of Syncretism; it is tolerant and it has the "power of adapting itself to the various tendencies of human nature." In the article on Vallabha, in the 12th Volume of the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* (p. 580) it is written:

"The strength of Hinduism lies in its manysidedness, its power of adapting itself to the various tendencies of human nature, both the good and the evil. In Vaisnavism, with its worship of a God who was believed to have manifested his sympathy with the world's suffering by frequent descents upon the earth (*avatar*), the masses of the people found the elements of a religion that seemed to bring God near to their faith and love. The personal element in religious life began to have fuller play... Notwithstanding its rigid conservatism in religion regarded as a social institution, the Hindu mind has always shown a marvellous receptivity of new doctrine." (*E. R. E.* Vol. XII, Article—Vallabha 2580).

Another writer in the same Volume of the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* (p. 360) in the article on Toleration, says that "Hinduism is the most tolerant of religions." He writes:

"However lamentable the fact may be, it should not surprise us that greater intolerance has been found in Christian religions than among any other peoples. Polytheism allows of an indefinitely enlarging pantheon. Its theology admits the existence of separate national gods among the various nations. But

monotheism not only denies the existence of any such divinities: it regards the homage offered to them as a derogation from the worship due to the true God. Christianity, therefore, as well as the Judaism on which it is based, is necessarily intellectually intolerant. The same idea applies to Muhammadanism, which is always an intolerant religion as regards doctrine, even when it is not actively persecuting alien faiths. Then both Christianity and Muhammadanism claim to be universal religions: they are essentially aggressive: and the positive missionary work which this fact implies easily passes over into overt acts for the repression of idolatry and polytheism... Enthusiasm, in extreme cases degenerating into fanaticism, urges the devotees of a missionary religion towards a militancy which the hereditary adherents of non-aggressive religions have less inducement to adopt. When paganism is not tolerant, this is generally due to resentment against those who have attacked it..."

(E. R. E. Vol. XII, p. 360)

Modern Hinduism is the product of Syncretism. This term is very well explained in the same volume of the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* (p. 156), from which the following passages are quoted:

"Syncretism denotes generally an unconscious, wide-spread tendency, due to or fostered by some readjustment of political relationships or by some clash of civilizations. There is a blending of religious ideas and practices, by means of which either one set adopts more or less thoroughly the principles of another or both are amalgamated in a more cosmopolitan and less polytheistic shape. Such movements in the religious world are often preceded and accelerated by a new philosophical synthesis as well as by a political re-arrangement, but the outcome invariably is a unification of deities, which...proceeds on one or other of two lines; either two deities of different religions are assimilated by comparison or several deities are grouped together in a fresh synthesis. The motives for this re-statement are drawn

from the dawning consciousness that any particular form of religion is no longer adequate by itself, that others possess like features possibly of superior efficacy and appeal, and that such features can be incorporated without detriment to the essential principles of the particular religion in question." (*E. R. E.*, XII p. 156).

But Hinduism as seen in our times cannot be a universal religion, unless and until the caste system is abolished. Sris Chandra understood it so well that he wrote a series of articles on it in the pages of the *Theosophist* for 1898 and 1899. He was most uncompromising in his writings in his attitude towards this greatest evil of the Hindu society.

*TRIP TO NAINI TAL (1897)*

Towards the end of 1896, when Sris Chandra got himself examined for life insurance, the examining medical officer detected sugar in his urine. As was usual in those days, he told Sris Chandra that he was suffering from Diabetes and advised him to place himself under proper medical treatment. The doctors whom he consulted recommended him to take leave and spend the summer of 1897 in some hill station. His brother was at that time serving in Satara and asked him to come there. Satara is a hill station, from where Mahableshtar, the summer resort of the Bombay Government, is not very far, and it also possesses a very salubrious climate. He applied for leave and would have gone to Satara, but Mr. Justice G. E. Knox, who, as English Judge, had to recommend his leave, knowing this, wrote to him to see him at Allahabad. He wrote:



"River View, Allahabad.

March 31, 1897.

Dear Sir,

I see that you are going to take leave. Shall you be coming up to Allahabad? If so, I shall be glad to see you.

Yours Truly  
G. E. Knox."

Sris Chandra made over charge to Babu (afterwards Rai Bahadur) Shiv Prasad on 14th April, 1897 and started for Allahabad, where Mr. Justice Knox asked him to go to Naini Tal and coach his son, Mr. Kenneth Knox, in Sanskrit for the I. C. S. Sris Chandra could not refuse this request of Mr. Justice Knox. He had applied for leave to spend it in a quiet and inexpensive place like Satara and where, if medical advice were necessary, he would be under the care of his brother. But now he had to incur heavy expenses for his outfit and other necessary things for living in an expensive place like Naini Tal, where he would be quite a stranger and had to pay the house-rent for the season. The preparation took him some time. In his diary under 18th May, 1897, it is written that he left for Naini Tal *via* Cawnpur, accompanied by Babu Manmatha Nath Pal and one Sanyasi. Manmatha Nath was married to his niece (sister's daughter) and was a B. A., B. T., of the Calcutta University. He took him to help him in coaching Mr. Kenneth Knox. When Sris Chandra came down from Naini Tal, he left Manmatha Nath there to coach Mr. Knox.

The trip to Naini Tal was hardly beneficial to Sris Chandra's health, for his stay there did not mean rest for

him. As a second-grade Munsif at that time, he was drawing Rupees three hundred only per month. He was not paid the full pay on privilege leave, but only half of it. After paying the income tax and the premium on his life Policy, what remained to him was not enough to live in comfort at Naini Tal. So the trip made him incur debt.

It was the only time in his life that he spent a summer on any Indian hill.

We reproduce below another letter of Mr. Justice Knox written on June 12, 1897:

"Dear Mr. Basu,

I delayed answering your letter of the 5th as there seemed to be some chance of your being posted to Benares for a time. The Munsif there had applied for leave on the ground of ill health but had sent no medical certificate. The Civil Surgeon says that he is not ill and so his leave cannot be granted.

I am quite willing that you should return by the 20th. Indeed I am very grateful to you for all the trouble you have taken. As you pass through, if you can spare the time, I should be glad to see you for a few minutes.

Yours truly  
G. E. Knox."

A letter written by his student, Mr. Kenneth Knox, is quoted below :

Braemar  
Naini Tal  
May 23rd, '97

Dear Mr. Basu,

Many thanks for your letter and the notes. If you can come up to-morrow, I shall be quite ready to continue the reading, as I have no engagement till the evening.

My books have arrived from Allahabad, a copy of *Panchatantra* similar to yours, a translation of *Sakuntala* by Monier-Williams and a translation of the *Meghaduta*. But I will keep your copy of the *Panchatantra* to save you the trouble of carrying it up to-morrow.

I also send my translation of the *Sakuntala*, which I read with your son-in-law on Friday.

Yours sincerely,  
Kenneth N. Knox."

Mr. Justice G. E. Knox used to seek the advice of Sris Chandra on many knotty points in his reading of Sanskrit, as the following letter will show :

"Allahabad  
the 5th May, 1907.

Dear Srish Chandra,

Will you kindly examine critically for me *Manu.*, sk. IX, vv. 187 and give me the benefit of your valuable opinion on the following: 1st—Is सपिण्डात् grammatically dependent upon अनन्तरः and do comparatives like अनन्तरः govern an ablative? What is the authority?

2nd—Could सपिण्डात् in any case be translated from the standpoint of sapindaship?

3rd—Is तस्य तस्य distributive or grammatically may the first of the two "तस्य"s depend upon यः ?

4. From a Hindu point of view would a person who had common particles ( पिण्ड ) from a common father and mother be सपिण्डाद् अनन्तरः than one descended from a common father (but different mother) and nearer in degree of descent?

5. If the answer to 4 is 'yes', is *Mitakshara* II Ch. 4, which allow the brother of half blood to succeed in preference to nephew of full blood, an exception to the rule in *Manu* or on what other principle can the distinction be explained?

I am sorry to give you so much trouble when you are so busy, but your opinion would be in my eyes of much value.

Yours sincerely,  
G. E. Knox."

#### HIS INTEREST IN BUDDHISM

The founders of the Theosophical Society called themselves Buddhists. So when he joined that Society, he read Olcott's *Catechism of Buddhism* and took some interest in it. But the visit of Dharmapala to Benares in 1899, who was his guest there, and also the visit of the monk Prince of Siam, roused his great interest in Buddhism. His brother, Major B. D. Basu, I. M. S. (Retd.), had excavated a few mounds in the Eusafzai and Swat Valleys and had brought several specimens of Gandhara sculpture, some pictures and descriptions of which appeared in *The Modern Review* for April, 1924. The monk Prince of Siam saw these sculptures and greatly admired them and asked Sris Chandra, if he could take away one of the specimens. Accordingly, one of the best specimens was presented to the Prince, who in return presented Sris Chandra some of the Buddhist books. As usual with Sris Chandra, he read these Buddhist scriptures with great interest.

Srish Chandra was well acquainted with the Bible of the Christians, the Koran and the law-books of the Muhammadans, the Zendavesta of the Parsis, and the sacred books of the Hindus and the Buddhists.

He also took great interest in Bahaism and secured the literature on the subject then available in English and Persian. He made the acquaintance of the Bahais





at the All-India Religious Conference held at Allahabad in January 1911, of which his brother Major B. D. Basu was one of the Secretaries. Ex-Justice Sarada Charan Mitra was the General Secretary and stayed with him as his guest. So all the people attending the Conference came to his house for preparing the programme.

*WHAT HE WAS AND WHAT HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN*

Srish Chandra had the capacity and ability to have made his mark in any walk in life. Had he practised his own profession, he would have towered head and shoulders above his contemporaries. But he said, successful lawyers' pockets were lined with gold, hence there was so much competition in the legal profession. If money did not come into his pockets, it would go into some one else's. That made hardly much difference to the sum total.

Such studies as were not paying, but necessary for nation-building and for the uplift of humanity, were neglected and ignored. Some one had to do it, why should not he? Therefore he devoted his time and energy and ability to the study of Sanskrit, Upanishads and the Vedanta. No great cause was ever achieved without sacrifice.

*SRIS CHANDRA CREATED A RAI BAHADUR*

The title of Rai Bahadur was conferred on Sris Chandra quite unsolicited. He had no inkling about it till at the Durbar held at Benares on the Coronation day, it was announced to him. *The Pioneer* wrote thus :

"Public honours and distinctions do not, as a rule, come to those who do not seek for them. Yet he has been their recipient

without in any way soliciting for them. In 1900, he was nominated by Government a Fellow of the Allahabad University. In recognition of his services as an able officer he was created a Rai Bahadur by the Government of India on the Coronation Day of His Most Gracious Majesty the King-Emperor George V. He is also a recipient of the Coronation Durbar medal. For a man of his retiring nature, a scholar and thinker, these distinctions show the esteem in which he is held by the Government, whom he and his family have most loyally served for two generations."

*SRIS CHANDRA MADE VIDYARNAVA*

The Bharat Dharma Mahamandal at its session in Benares in December 1895, conferred on him the title of *Vidyarnava*. He was then lying ill at Allahabad, so he did not attend the session of the Bharat Dharma Mahamandal at Benares. This honour also was quite unsolicited.

He valued this honour very highly. Perhaps he would not have valued an honorary doctorate of any University as much as he did this title of *Vidyarnava*. He used to say that we should learn to esteem our indigenous titles, which people of the country understand and of which they properly estimate the true worth than foreign titles not intelligible to the common folk of this country. It was also a source of pleasure to him that the title *Vidyarnava*, the blue badge of Sanskrit learning, should have been conferred on him at Benares, the seat of Hindu orthodoxy, where he was not popular with the majority of Sanskrit Pandits, as some of them felt themselves humiliated by his searching cross-examination of them in the well-known caste case in 1911.



*SRISH CHANDRA AS A FREEMASON*

In 1896 Sris Chandra joined the Order of Freemasons at Benares. But after some years, he left it, saying that it served no useful purpose in India. It benefited Christians mostly at the expense of the Hindus and Mussalmans—the widows and orphans of which creeds when in need of help and charity seldom, if ever, getting the same from Freemasons.

*SRISH CHANDRA MEMBER OF CO-MASONRY LODGE*

The Co-Masonry Lodge was started by Mrs. Besant. Sris Chandra joined this Lodge also and meetings of the Co-Masonry Lodge were held at his house in Allahabad.

*HIS PARTIALITY FOR ENGLISH EDUCATION*

Sris Chandra was in favour of English education in India. As long as the present Government in India is English in character, to understand the English people, their customs, manners, institutions and history, it is necessary for Indians to know and study the English language and also to write in it. What Indians write is very often Baboo English, but that does not matter. Baboo English will be one kind of English.





## CHAPTER IX

### *LAST YEARS OF HIS SERVICE*

#### *SRIS CHANDRA AT ALLAHABAD (1901-5)*

In 1901 when Major B. D. Basu's wife became ill, his presence at Allahabad became necessary. Srish Chandra, therefore, wrote to Mr. Justice Knox asking him for transfer to Allahabad. Mr. Justice Knox sent for him and got him transferred to Allahabad.

His brother, Major B. D. Basu, also came on sick leave and occupied Darbhanga Retreat, Chatham Lines, where his wife was removed for the benefit of her health. Unfortunately, she died in July, 1902.

After this unfortunate incident, Sris Chandra returned to the city house, the construction of which was then completed.

At this time Babu Ramananda Chatterjee, M. A., was serving as the Principal of the Kayastha Pathshala. Sris Chandra made his acquaintance at Allahabad. While in service in Allahabad, Ramananda Babu started the *Prabasi* in Bengali. He started *The Modern Review* at Allahabad after resigning his principalship. He received much help from Srish Chandra as well as his brother Major B. D. Basu.

Srish Chandra also made the acquaintance of Babu Indu Bhushan Ray, a Brahmo missionary. His sister, Jagat Mohini, and her husband, Babu Taran Chandra Das, had

enlisted themselves as members of the Brahmo Samaj. Prayer meetings of the Brahmo Samaj were held in his house. He also engaged Muhammadan *qawalis* and Hindu singers to sing devotional songs in Persian, Urdu and Hindi.

At this time he established *Anjuman-i-Tasafuf* to encourage the study and preaching of Sufism, which, in his opinion, was Vedantism. Many Muhammadan gentlemen attended the meetings of the *Anjuman* at his house.

It has already been mentioned that Sris Chandra was an ardent Theosophist and an admirer of Mrs. Annie Besant. So when in the middle of January 1903, Dr. Besant visited Allahabad, she stayed with Sris Chandra in his city house. A good many of the leading men of Allahabad frequented his house all the time that she stayed there. She delivered two eloquent and powerful speeches in the Mayo Hall.

#### DEATH OF TARAN CHANDRA DAS

About a week after Mrs. Besant's departure from Allahabad, Sris Chandra's brother-in-law, Babu Taran Chandra Das, died on the 29th January. This melancholy event cast a gloom over the household, coming as it did about six months after the death of his brother's wife.

Amidst all these troubles and disasters, Sris Chandra went on with his literary labours. He worked harder than before, for, as he used to say, he drowned his sorrow in work.

The translations of the *Isa* and *Kena Upanishads* were commenced at Benares, where Dr. Thirlwall studied two or

three *Upanishads* with his help. He helped him in writing out the word meanings of two *Upanishads*.

In Allahabad, Sris Chandra finished the translations of the *Isa* and *Kena Upanishads*, in which he gave the interpretations of the verses according to Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhwa. These two *Upanishads* were printed and published by Babu Chintamani Ghosh, proprietor of the Indian Press.

The well-known Sanskrit Grammar, the *Siddhanta Kaumudi*, in which the *sutras* of Panini are rationally arranged, is so difficult that students of Sanskrit take about a dozen years to master it. To make its study easy, Sris Chandra undertook to translate it with copious explanatory notes. This he commenced in January 1903. His brother, Major B. D. Basu, who was then on leave, helped him greatly in his self-imposed task. How well he did it, will be evident from the following opinion of Prof. Louis de la Vallee Poussin of Ghent and Editor of the *Museon* :

"I have duly received the first volume of your *Siddhanta Kaumudi*. I was much pleased to get such a nice present from you. I have no hesitation to confess that I found inextricable difficulties in the use of Bothlingk's *Panini* before I was so fortunate as to obtain from my friend \* \* a spare copy of your *Astadhyayi*. It is a capital book of reference, and this *Siddhanta Kaumudi* for study."

The *Pioneer* remarked on the 22nd December, 1912 :

"Rai Bahadur Sris Chandra Basu, by completing the translation of this important work, *Siddhanta Kaumudi*, has placed Sanskritists under great obligations to him."

The translations of *Siddhanta Kaumudi* and *Astadhyayi*

of Panini show his deep knowledge of Sanskrit. They will always mark him out as one of the greatest Sanskrit scholars of Modern India. Though engaged in Government service, he could find time and energy for such a self-imposed task. His translation of *Astadhyayi* of Panini has by this time replaced that of Bothlingk. It is now eagerly sought after by the Sanskrit students of both India and Europe along with his *Siddhanta Kaumudi*.

The translation and printing of the *Siddhanta Kaumudi* were not completed till 1907, that is, for a space of nearly seven years. To be with him and help him in this great undertaking, his brother Major B. D. Basu had to take leave frequently and come to Allahabad to work with him. Thus he took two months' privilege leave in December 1903 and January 1904, one year's furlough from October 1904 to the end of September 1905, and again two months' privilege leave in February and March 1906. His health had given way and he came again on three months' sick leave to Allahabad in June 1906. Finally he took one year's furlough preparatory to retirement from the service in May 1907.

#### PARTITION OF BENGAL

Before leaving India, Lord Curzon partitioned Bengal in 1905—a measure which was pronounced by Lord Macdonnell, an experienced Anglo-Indian administrator, as the greatest blunder since the days of Plassey. This Partition was a great blessing in disguise, not only to Bengal, but to the whole of India.

Mrs. Besant visited Allahabad in November, 1905 and

was the guest of Sris Chandra. She delivered a very powerful speech in the Mayo Hall on *India's New Life*, in which she condemned the Partition and spoke in favour of Swadeshi and Boycott of British goods, which that measure had brought into existence.

MR. BROOKS' TRANSLATION OF THE GITA

Mr. F. T. Brooks was brought out to India along with Dr. Thirlwall by Mrs. Besant. They sailed out together in the same boat and curiously enough ended their earthly career in the same manner by committing suicide. Mr. Brooks was appointed tutor of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru in 1901 and he became a very frequent, almost a daily visitor of Sris Chandra. He read the *Bhagavad Gita* with him. Afterwards he translated the Gita into English. He thought that he had sufficiently expressed gratitude to Srish Chandra for all the trouble which the latter took in making him understand the Gita by casually mentioning in the preface of the translation in one sentence only that Srish Chandra rendered him some help in the translation.

SRISH CHANDRA AT GHAZIPUR

(December 1905 to September 1903)

In December 1905, Srish Chandra was promoted to the grade of Sub-Judge and was posted at Ghazipur. He was transferred for a few months to Benares in 1907, where he served as Judge of the Small Causes Court.

During his stay at Ghazipur, he utilised his time in studying the *Vedanta Sutras* with the commentaries of Ramanuja, Madhwa, Ballabha, Baladeva, Nimbarka and



Vijnana-Bhiksu and undertook the gigantic task of translating all these commentaries into English. But he could not proceed very far with this task. After his death, the editor of the *Sacred Books of the Hindus* published in that series under the heading of '*Studies in Vedanta Sutras*' the translations of the different commentaries so far as left by him.

He was also engaged in the study of the *Upanishads* with the commentary of Madhwa and also translating the same into English.

#### SRISH CHANDRA AT ALLAHABAD

(September 1908 to October 1909)

Srish Chandra was transferred from Ghazipur to Allahabad in September 1908. He wanted to publish his translations and suggested to his brother the idea of publishing them in a series to be called *The Sacred Books of the Hindus* under his editorship. His brother, Major B. D. Basu, took up the suggestion and acted accordingly. It would have been better had he himself become the editor of the series. But as a Government servant, it would have required the permission of Government to do so. He did not like it. The Panini Office stood as publishers of the series. The first issue came out in July 1909 and month after month it was published regularly. In the first three numbers appeared his translations of the six minor Upanishads, namely, the *Isa*, *Kena*, *Katha*, *Prasna*, *Mundaka* and *Mandukya*, with Madhwa's commentary, word-meanings and copious explanatory notes, etc.

In October 1908, Mrs. Besant visited Allahabad and was

again his guest. The bomb outrage at Muzaffarpur made her imagine that educated Indians sympathised with bomb-throwers. She was, therefore, visiting different towns of India to establish the "Order of the Sons of India."

*SRISH CHANDRA AT BAREILLY*

(November 1909 to November 1910)

In November 1909, Srish Chandra was transferred to Bareilly, where he joined after the Dussera vacation. He was there for one year, during which period he found time to finish the *Chandogya Upanishad* and part of the *Vedanta Sutras* with Baladeva's commentary.

When his Majesty the King-Emperor Edward VII died in May 1910, to perpetuate his memory, he raised subscriptions and established the Edward High School at Bareilly. This was the last educational institution he helped in establishing.

*SRISH CHANDRA AT BENARES*

(November 1910 to November 1912)

In November 1910, Srish Chandra was posted again at Benares. A few months after he took up the charge of his office, he had to decide the well-known Benares caste case, in which an England-returned gentleman was involved.

The defendant party brought learned Pandits of Benares to depose that sea-voyage was not allowed by the Hindu scriptures. The best-known of these Pandits was Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Shiva Kumar Shastri. He was reputed to be well-versed in Hindu Law books and Sanskrit grammar. The pleaders engaged on either side

had hardly any pretensions to Sanskrit scholarship—much less to Sanskrit grammar or law books written in Sanskrit and their commentaries. So there was no one to cross-examine the Pandits, who thought, therefore, they would have an easy time in the court, and whatever they would depose would be taken as evidence of expert witnesses. But they counted without their host in the Judge before whom lay the case. They were subjected to such cross-examination by Srish Chandra, that they considered themselves no match for him in Sanskrit scholarship in general and Hindu law and Sanskrit grammar in particular.

The case dragged on for many a long day and summaries of the proceedings were sent by wire day after day to all the leading dailies of the country. So the attention of the reading public was drawn to this case, which they watched with great interest.

Srish Chandra ransacked almost the whole literature on Hindu law, both printed and MSS., preserved in some of the well-known libraries of Benares—public as well as private, to study the question whether sea-voyage entailed loss of caste to a high-class Hindu. It took him a long time to prepare and write his judgment on the case before him. The judgment, for his lucid exposition of the views of the Hindu law-givers on sea-voyage, exacted the admiration of all right-thinking persons. It is understood that the title of Rai Bahadur that was conferred on him on the occasion of the Coronation at Delhi on 12th December, 1911 was meant to recognise his scholarship in writing this judgment. It was also thought by many, that in appreciation of his learning and work

as a judge, he would be promoted to the High Court Bench. Great surprise was, therefore, felt and expressed by well-known journals of the time when he was passed over and not given what he richly merited.

It was alleged by some unscrupulous lawyers that he forced parties to compromise their cases. Of course this was not profitable to a certain class of pleaders who lived by fomenting litigation. But Sris Chandra never forced compromise, but suggested and advised litigants not to ruin themselves by quarreling. He looked to the interests of the poor and deluded litigants, who by acting on his advice saved themselves from becoming paupers.

#### *ALL-INDIA LITERARY CONFERENCE*

The United Provinces Exhibition was opened on 1st December 1910 and closed on 29th February 1911. The Indian National Congress also held its session that year at Allahabad. The All-India Literary Conference also met at Allahabad during the Christmas week. Ex-Justice Sarada Charan Mitra was the Secretary of the All-India Literary Conference as well as of the Religious Conference which also met at Allahabad in January 1911. For all these functions, about a hundred guests were accommodated at Sris Chandra's house during those three months.

During these three months no other Bengali resident of Allahabad entertained so many guests as he did. It was always a great pleasure to him to show hospitality to those who visited him.

*SRIS CHANDRA AT AGRA (NOV. 1912 TO FEB. 1913)*

Sris Chandra served as Judge, Small Causes Court, Agra, being transferred from Benares in November 1912. At Agra Sris Chandra stayed with his old friend Rai Bahadur Lala Baij Nath. In his company, he spent the time happily discussing subjects of Hindu philosophy, theology and kindred topics, which were dear to both of them. Baij Nath owed much of his information on the subjects he wrote upon to Sris Chandra.

*SRIS CHANDRA AT ALLAHABAD (FEB. AND MARCH 1913)*

Sris Chandra came from Agra to Allahabad to officiate at first as Judge, Small Causes Court and then as District Judge. A criminal case was instituted in his Court by the Police which he dismissed. A certain high official interested in the case was so enraged that he was alleged to have said that Munsif Judges differed from Magistrate Judges in not understanding evidence in Criminal cases ! But no one advised him to prefer an appeal against the Munsif-Judge's judgment.

The Indian Girls' Free High School was founded by him in 1888, as has already been mentioned. For a little over a quarter of a century, it had been in existence, but it had no building of its own. It was accommodated in hired houses and, as the rent of houses at Allahabad was increasing day after day, there was the possibility of the school not getting a suitable house to hold its classes. He felt the necessity of the school having a building of its own. He spoke about it to his brother, who, agreeing with him, thought it best

to consult Babu Charu Chandra Mitra on the subject. Charu Babu was then the Vice-Chairman of the Allahabad Municipality and always took great interest in that school, as both of his daughters (the elder one, the wife of Mr. Kiran Chandra Dey, M.A., I.C.S., C.I.E.) received their education in it. Charu Babu approved of the proposal and taking the two brothers showed them a house in Hewett Road, which according to him would cost ten thousand Rupees. Sris Chandra expressed his willingness to contribute one thousand Rupees to the school building fund. Through the exertions of his brother Major B. D. Basu, Charu Babu, Professor Nalin Bihari Mitra, M.A., and latterly of Dr. Satish Chandra Banerji, who was the Secretary of the School, the sum of ten thousand Rupees was raised and the house acquired, in which the school is located now.

*SRISH CHANDRA AT GORAKHPUR (Apl. 1913—Apl. 1914)*

Gorakhpur district is an interesting place. Lord Buddha died here at Kasia. The Jain Tirthankar Mahavir also lived here. The tradition places the birth-place of Kabir also in this district. It also derives its name from the mystic saint Guru Gorakh Nath. It borders on the Nepal Terai. The place is very interesting to antiquarians. It was his service as Collector of this district and later as Commissioner of Gorakhpur Division, which inspired Mr. Vincent Smith with interest in Archaeology and enabled him to write on Ancient Indian History.

In April 1913 Sris Chandra was appointed as an Additional

District Judge of Gorakhpur. The District Judge of Gorakhpur at that time was a Civilian, an Englishman, who was highly connected. These were his recommendations for being suffered to hold the office, for which he was not otherwise physically or mentally fit. So the burden of the work of the District Judge fell on Srish Chandra's shoulders. He had also to hold sessions at Basti.

In addition to his official duties, he took interest in educational matters. He was instrumental in establishing here a Theosophical Girls' School and a College. The latter institution had to be closed as the Allahabad University refused to affiliate it, mostly on the ground that there was already a Christian College in that place.

The well-known Barrister of Gorakhpur Mr. Ajodhya Das, a renowned Theosophist, was also connected with these institutions. His purse was always open for the furtherance of every educational cause.

*SRISH CHANDRA AT BUDAUN (April to December 1914)*

In April 1914 Sris Chandra was transferred from Gorakhpur to Budaun. The Christian Judge of the place was a typical Anglo-Indian bureaucrat who felt no sympathy for the people of this country. There was no Judge's bungalow at Budaun. The house which the Judge was occupying belonged to the Railway. He thought it would be polluted if a "Kala Admi" came to live in it. So when he was written to, whether Sris Chandra could occupy it when he left Budaun on leave, the gentleman forwarded the following characteristic letter to him :

Budaun  
21. 3. 14.

Dear Sir,

Yours of the 16th inst. recd. 18th. The Sub-Judge's reply to your inquiries is incorrect. No bungalow will be available. Last year I wanted a disused one on the river bank, but the owner would not put it into repair, and two Engineers condemned it as unsafe (roof). Since then there has been a little potai etc., but Dist. Surveyor says he cannot recommend it for the rains. I am occupying the Rly. rest house *by the month* only; I put up the Rly. Engr. whenever he comes and as the Rly. Co. expects to use the bungalow continuously from June to October this year they decline to let it when I go on leave. Moreover it leaks badly at every shower. The Collector has already informed the Commissioner of the difficulty.

You could write to the Chief Secretary pointing out your difficulty. The High Court last year declined to move Government to acquire or build a house, apparently for want of funds.

The old Sessions house is utilized to the last square inch by Judge's and Sub-Judge's courts and offices, and the dak bungalow (if not surrendered to the Judicial Department on 1st proximo to be used as Munsifi and record room, as desired by the High Court) will during the non-camping season be used by *at least* two Magistrates as courts and offices, like last year, as the Additional Cutcherries for Collectorate as well as for our department have not been commenced yet.

Yours truly,  
L. Marshall

Rai Sris Chandra Basu Bahadur  
Additional Judge, Gorakhpur.

On receiving the above letter, Sris Chandra drafted the following reply to be sent to the Registrar, High Court of Judicature, N. W. P.



Gorakhpur  
The 28th March, 1914.

Dear Sir,

I have been transferred to Badaun, and I am to relieve Mr. Marshall on the 7th of April.

I was informed of the arrangement some time ago, and have since then been trying to secure a bungalow to live in. As I could not secure one, I was obliged to write to Mr. Marshall, and to ask him if he could spare the whole or a part of his house. His reply is enclosed (reproduced above).

It would not perhaps be desirable that I should live in one of the Indian houses within the town. It is a pity that there should be a Judgeship at Badaun without a suitable house for the Judge to live in.

I have been obliged to bring the matter to the notice of the Hon'ble Court with the hope that a recommendation from you personally or a note from the Hon'ble Court, may induce the Railway authorities to spare the house now occupied by Mr. Marshall, for me.

Yours sincerely,  
Sris Chandra Basu.

Sris Chandra drafted the above letter intended to be sent to the Registrar, High Court. But before doing so, he came to Allahabad to see Mr. Justice Knox and showed him the letter which he had drafted. Sir George Knox told him that there was available a bungalow at Budaun, which he rented. Thus ended the unpleasant episode.

When Sir George Knox went to inspect the courts at Budaun, he was the guest of Sris Chandra there. How pleasantly he spent the time there, is evident from a letter to Sris Chandra.

## MR. JUSTICE KNOX'S CONVOCATION ADDRESS (1905)

Mr. Justice Knox was the Vice-Chancellor of the Allahabad University for a number of years. He knew a little bit of Sanskrit which he said he had learnt from Professor Goldstucker. He was very fond of showing his knowledge of Sanskrit by quoting from Sanskrit authors in his Convocation addresses. He had, however, to depend on Sris Chandra for supplying him with those verses. Thus in the Convocation Address of November 11, 1905, the following verse—

चित्तमेवहि संसारं तत्प्रयत्नेन शोधयेत् ।

यच्चित्तस्तन्मयो भवति गुह्यमेतत् सनातनम् ॥

was supplied by Sris Chandra. This verse is from the *Maitri Upanishad*, VI, 343.

Mr. Justice Knox began his Convocation Address thus :

"Gentlemen of the Senate.—Throughout the year now closing and indeed for some years past Universities have been much in evidence. What courses should be taught in them and what subjects should be excluded has been the property of the man in the street not only in this country but also in the mother country. Newspapers and magazines have thrown their pages open freely. Recently a writer of some note undertook to sketch out for the readers for the "*Nineteenth Century*" the buildings, the personnel and the course of studies of an ideal University. It contains much that is of interest and of profit. Speaking of the Vice-Chancellor the writer says—

'Buildings there must be, and in particular the Vice-Chancellor should live 'over the shop.' He should not play the fine gentleman, or live on £10 a week at the club and pocket the balance of his income. Vice-Chancellor's lodge should be a feature from the outset of every new University.'

Well, Gentlemen of the Senate, so far as this University is concerned, I am afraid the Vice-Chancellor's lodge and the Vice-Chancellor's income are still dreams and dreams in the land of far away."

This was pronounced on the 14th Nov. 1905. But in the course of a decade, this 'dream in the land of far away' has come to be realised at least in the Allahabad University, which has now a *paid* Vice-Chancellor.

In conclusion, Mr. Justice Knox addressed the Graduates thus :—

"Graduates, I have already charged you in the brief but eloquent words which this University prescribes that I should utter when conferring on you your degrees. Be your past what it may, it is for you to look to it that the future is worthy of what men expect from a cultured man.

I feel the fear that by adding to those words I may diminish their force, still let me remind you that to carry out this charge you need something beyond mere head knowledge. Let me recall to the Indian students words with which doubtless many of them are familiar, words which reveal to you one of the secret springs of the force which will enable you to keep faithfully the charge of this University.

चित्तमेव हि ससारं तत्प्रयत्नेन बोधयेत् ।

यच्चित्तस्तन्मयो भवति गुह्यमेतत् सनातनम् ॥

To all students Indian and European alike—

—Wait God's instant men call years;  
Meantime hold hard by truth and his great soul,  
Do out the duty! Through such souls alone  
God stooping shows sufficient of His light  
For us i' the dark to rise by."

*(Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Senate of the University of Allahabad, 1905, pp. 144-145).*

*SRIS CHANDRA AT BAREILLY (1915)*

Shrish Chandra was transferred to Bareilly again as an Additional Judge in 1915. It was his third tour of service at Bareilly. The first time was in 1886 as an officiating Munsif, second time as Sub-Judge in 1909-10, when he was instrumental in establishing the Edward High School, and now for the third time as District Judge. The few months he spent there were devoted to clearing heavy arrears.

Both at Budaun and Bareilly, he tried to interest Muhammadans in Theosophy, held meetings at his house where leading Mussalman gentlemen were invited and works of Sufi poets in Persian were read and discussed. Of course, he went on with his translation of the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* as usual.

*SRIS CHANDRA AT SITAPUR*

(6th March to 19th May 1915)

The last place where he served was Sitapur, where he was transferred on 6th March 1915. He had worked hard in the service for over twenty-three years. The strain on him as a District Judge was very great. He had to do the same work with the same responsibility as a Civilian Judge, but received 64 percent only of his pay, while he was expected to live in the same style as the Civilian Judge. As a District Officer, he had precedence over the Collector, so he had to contribute more than that

officer to all public functions. He found that the office of District Judge was no gain to him financially. His health broke down, he could not get sound sleep owing to the high pressure of official work.

Another pest which troubled him greatly was one Mr. Brooks, regarding whom mention has already been made before. He was not only an uninvited guest, but like a parasite fed and clothed himself gorgeously all the time that Sris Chandra was in service at Sitapur. This European Theosophist was an inveterate tea-drinker. He used to consume a very large number of cups of tea in a day and unfortunately Sris Chandra, to keep company with him, also did the same. The result was that symptoms of high blood pressure were noticed. He found it very difficult to get rid of Mr. Brooks, who was becoming a great nuisance day after day. So Sris Chandra at last decided to take leave preparatory to retirement. He was to complete 55 years of age on 20th March 1916. So he applied for ten months' leave, four of which was to be 'privilege.' This was granted and, bidding farewell to service, he came to Allahabad on the 20th May, 1915.

After his retirement from service, he came to Allahabad and busied himself in literary and other pursuits which had been dear to him all his life. He devoted much of his time to the translation of the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*.

In the beginning of June 1915, Dr. Satish Chandra Banerjee fell ill and died. Dr. Banerjee was younger than he. His death moved him very deeply. Satish Chandra was a Vice-President of the Anglo-Bengali

School and on his death, Sris Chandra was elected to fill the vacancy. He remarked to his brother that he was now to follow Satish Chandra soon to the grave. On the 29th of the same month, he had convulsive fits due to high blood pressure.

*BHUVANESWARI LIBRARY*

Voracious reader as Sris Chandra was, he collected books on such subjects as he was interested in. He named his family library *Bhuvanewari Library* after his dear mother. It grew year after year by purchase and exchange of books for the publications of Panini office, as well as presents from Government and even private individuals. Lieut-Colonel K. R. Kirtikar visited Allahabad in the Christmas week of 1914 and was his guest. He was so favourably impressed by this Bhuvanewari Library, that by his will he bequeathed the greater portion of his valuable library to Major B. D. Basu, who had greatly extended the Library. This library is one of the best private libraries in India. It is rich in Sanskrit, Archaeological and Indian historical works. The credit of establishing this library belongs to Sris Chandra.

*ACADEMY OF INDIAN RESEARCH*

It was the ardent desire of Sris Chandra to promote the cause of Sanskrit learning in this country. It was one of the objects of the Panini Office to do so. When the *Sacred Books of the Hindus* series was started, Sris Chandra conceived the idea of establishing the "Society

for the Propagation of Hindu Literature." He asked his brother, Major B. D. Basu, to act as Secretary of the new-born Society. A prospectus of the Society was also circulated.

Letters signed by Sir Sundar Lal as well as by Pandit Moti Lal Nehru were addressed to talookdars, zamindars, members of the Councils, Hindu barristers, vakils, doctors and other educated men to join the Society and help in the propagation of Hindu literature. But all this fell flat on the country. The Hindus have not that enthusiasm for the diffusion of their religious or secular literature which the votaries of other creeds possess for their religious lore.

However, another name of the Panini office given within brackets is—*Academy of Indian Research*. It may even now be made a thoroughly public institution, if the educated persons of the country come forward and try to make it so.

#### HIS ROUTINE OF WORK

Sris Chandra used to rise early in the morning at 4 A.M. After washing himself and having a bath, he performed his *puja* and meditation. Then he worked for two or three hours on literary subjects, after which taking breakfast, he was ready for the Court. Returning from the Court, after recreation for an hour or so, he again went on with his literary work till late at night.

Working so hard for years told on his health and he had to pay the penalty for this in suffering from high blood pressure.

*HIS FRIENDS IN SERVICE*

Government service as service had little attraction for him. For a man of his retiring nature, given to literary pursuits, it was not possible to make many friends. The best of his friends in the service, was Rai Bahadur Baij Nath. There were many things in common between the two. Both were given to literary pursuits and study of Sanskrit. Whenever Baij Nath came to Allahabad, he stayed with Srish Chandra. Baij Nath was an Agarwal Bania of Delhi. Men of his caste often asked him why he preferred staying with a Bengali gentleman to that with one of them. His reply was characteristic, for he said what subjects could he talk upon with them?

Of course, Srish Chandra did not make any enemy in the service.

*HIS CONTEMPORARIES AT THE BAR*

Sris Chandra passed the Vakilship Examination of the Allahabad High Court held in January 1883, standing 5th in the list of successful candidates, the first place being occupied by Pandit Moti Lal Nehru. Considering that he had worked for only two or three months previous to the Examination, the result was highly creditable to him.

When he came to practise in the High Court, the leader of the Vakil Bar was Pandit Ajodhya Nath. Once there was a passage-at-arms between that veteran doyen and the new recruit. A vakil named Barada Prasad Ghose went out of the station, handing over the brief of a case to Srish Chandra. Pandit Ajodhya Nath re-



presented one of the parties in this case. When the case came up for hearing, the Pandit objected to the appearance of Srish Chandra, for he did not hold the *Vakalatnama* of the client. He said : "My Lord, Mr. Srish Chandra cannot *act* in this case." In reply Srish Chandra said—"My Lord, certainly I cannot *act* like my learned friend on the opposite."

The whole Court roared with laughter. There was a pun on the word *act* which only those understood who knew Pandit Ajodhya Nath personally. The Pandit when pleading a case indulged in gestures which were hardly becoming a man of his standing.

Next to Pandit Ajodhya Nath, came Pandit Bishambhar Nath, who was a very dignified and quiet-looking gentleman.

But the most learned and fluent speaker in the Vakil Bar at that time was Babu Jogendra Nath Chowdhury. He had passed the M. A. Examination of the Calcutta University with great distinction and deserved to rise to the top of the Bar. The rising man in the Vakil Bar was Pandit Sundarlal.

Of the Barristers then practising, Mr. (afterwards Sir Walter) Colvin was the leader, who could afford to refuse the offer of High Court Judgeship. Next to him was Mr. Conlan. Both these Barristers entertained a high opinion of Sris Chandra and often engaged him as their junior.

At that time, the number of practising lawyers (both of the English and Indian Bar) in the High Court was about a couple of dozen. So the competition was not very keen. Srish Chandra, being perhaps the most

cultured of the lot, was making his mark and rising in the profession. The Judges entertained a very high opinion of him.

The profession of law attracts some men who from their inclinations and temperaments are not fitted to practise it. Such was the case with Srish Chandra. He used to say that no action can lie, unless the parties lie. Then he saw how poor litigants coming to Allahabad were fleeced by Vakils and their touts. Samuel Warren wrote "Passages from the Diary of a late Physician." So Srish Chandra wrote "Scenes From Real Life" in the columns of the *Indian Union*, which he was then editing. In it he exposed the conduct of the black sheep in the profession.

## CHAPTER X

### *HIS LAST DAYS*

The overwork of the judicial service broke his health. He used to suffer from headache and sleeplessness. So he applied for furlough of ten months from 20th May 1915 to 20th March 1916, when he would complete 55 years of age. On taking leave he came to Allahabad on 10th May 1915.

On 29th June 1915, Sris Chandra had convulsions for the first time in his life. He was attended to by Drs. S. P. Roy, B. P. Dutt and Avinash [Chandra Gupta, his brother and his eldest son being in constant attendance on him.

On the death of Dr. Satish Chandra Banerjee on 9th June 1915, Sris Chandra was chosen to fill the vacancy caused by his death on the Committee of the Anglo-Bengali School, Allahabad. As already mentioned, he casually remarked to his brother that he would soon follow Satish.

In the meantime appeared symptoms of high blood pressure. So he was confined to bed for a few days. After a few days he seemed to have recovered.

But nothing could prevent him from doing his literary work. He went on with the translation of the *Brihad-aranyaka Upanisad*.

Another mishap which plunged the whole household in grief was the death of his sister younger than he

by three years and who very carefully managed the affairs of the whole household. This melancholy event took place on the 26th October, 1915. This greatly upset him. At the same time his second daughter-in-law was laid up with fever and cough which was pronounced to be Phthisis. These affected him so greatly that he had another attack of convulsion on the morning of the 4th December 1915, and his second daughter-in-law died on the next day.

During the whole month of December, he was ailing more or less. For a change of air he was removed to the garden-house situated about nine miles from his city dwelling. Here again he showed symptoms of high blood pressure. So he was brought back to his city dwelling on the New Year's Day of 1916, when the Civil Surgeon of Allahabad, Lieutenant-Colonel Close, M.S., saw him. After a few days' rest in bed he so far considered himself well and strong that he went on with the translation of the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* and completed it. It was published in February, 1916.

But he would not cease from his literary activities. One of the learned Taluqdars of Oudh had translated the *Matsya Purana* into English for the Sacred Books of the Hindus. Sris Chandra went through the MSS. and wrote those essays which were published as Appendices and are indispensable to all students of the *Puranas*.

He could not be prevailed upon to take rest and cease from literary activities. He used to say that if he would not work, he would brood over his own illness. So no sooner was the first part of the *Matsya Purana*

published in the middle of 1916, than he set himself to complete the translation of the *Acharya Adhyaya* of the *Yajnavalkya Smriti* with the commentary known as *Mitakhsara* and notes from the gloss of Balambhatta. This was an arduous task, but he went on working at it for about eight or nine hours a day, till he completed it in the middle of September, 1916. About this time another mishap occurred in his household. His elder daughter-in-law died after childbirth on the 23rd September, 1916. This greatly upset him.

He again showed signs of high blood pressure. His eldest son, who was then serving as an Assistant Surgeon, Balrampur Hospital, Lucknow, took him there for a change. But his active mind could not remain at ease without doing something. He revised his well-known work, the *Daily Practice of the Hindus*. This revision resulted in considerably enlarging the book with the addition of new matter. This has been published as the third edition of the book in the Sacred Books of the Hindus Series.

While in Lucknow, with the object in view of translating the *Vedas*, he sent for those books from Allahabad. But he did not make much progress in this work, as on account of the Congress and several conventions which were held in Lucknow in December 1916, many visitors from several parts of India found asylum in his house as guests. He was never so happy as when attending on guests and friends. He did everything to make them comfortable and happy.

He returned to Allahabad on the 14th January, 1917. His old love of teaching made him teach his youngest

son—a boy then about eight years of age—English and Arithmetic. He devoted several hours a day to doing so.

On the 23rd January, 1917, while on his way, in company with his brother, to the garden-house, he learnt that Pandit Ram Charan Sukul, Honorary Magistrate and one of his old acquaintances in Allahabad, had been taken ill. He went to his house to see him. There he saw him lying unconscious with a stroke of paralysis. This again seems to have upset him greatly.

On the morning of the 24th January, he woke up early and asked his brother to go to the Ganges to see the *Magh Mela* and also some of the learned Sannyasins who had come there. He and his brother, with another friend, drove up to the *bund* and then walked down the river bed. After conversing with a few of the Sannyasins, he drove back home. Then, as usual with him, he taught his youngest son and corrected proofs for the press. His brother left him, took the proof to the press, visiting the Allahabad Public Library on the way. Sris Chandra also went an hour afterwards to the bath room. When coming out of the bath room, he cried out that the right side of his body was getting paralysed. A boy went on bicycle to inform his brother, who had been just outside the gate of the press when the messenger overtook him. He drove back to his house as fast as it was possible for the carriage to do so. By that time, the news had spread very rapidly and a good many of his Bengali friends and relatives together with a *posse* of medical men had arrived at his house. He was placed on a bed in a room near

the bath room. He was stricken with right hemiplegia and quite speechless. His eldest son, then in service, was wired to return to Allahabad, which he did early on the morning of the 25th.

Before the return of Sris Chandra to Allahabad on the 14th January 1917 from Lucknow, his second son practising as a Vakil in Allahabad, had gone to Kasauli, taking with him his cousin who had been bitten by a dog suspected to be rabid. He was also wired to and returned on the afternoon of the 25th.

Of all the medical men who attended on him, the late Dr. S. P. Roy took the greatest interest in him, visited him morning and evening and treated him with the greatest professional skill possible. After two months' treatment and nursing, he recovered his power of speech and seemed to be progressing favourably.

Lieut.-Colonel K. R. Kirtikar of Bombay visited Allahabad on two occasions and was his guest. His brother Major B. D. Basu and Col. Kirtikar were working together on *Indian Medicinal Plants*. From the beginning of January 1917, Colonel Kirtikar became bed-ridden with Phthisis. Seeing Sris Chandra progressing favourably, his brother Baman Das started for Bombay on the 25th April 1917, whom the bed-ridden Colonel Kirtikar repeatedly asked to come and see him. He reached Bombay on the afternoon of the 26th and he was hardly there for forty-eight hours when he received an urgent telegram on the 28th April to return immediately to Allahabad, as his brother's condition was very bad, who had several convulsions on that day. Leaving Bombay by the Calcutta

Mail, he returned to Allahabad on the 30th April before it was dawn. He found Sris Chandra speechless, but otherwise conscious. It was considered little less than a miracle that he survived all those fits of 28th April.

After a few days, he recovered the power of speech and seemed to be again progressing favourably. But unfortunately, again he had convulsions on the 9th June and although he recovered from them, his brain showed symptoms of softening.

He had again convulsions on 31st July and these were of such a severe type, that the left half of his body was paralysed. The paralysis was now complete and he was totally speechless and perfectly helpless and no response to any stimulus was discernible in him. He remained in this condition till death released him on the night of the 23rd June, 1918, at 10 P. M. A few friends and relations were informed of the melancholy event, who came and removed his dead body for cremation at about 4 A. M. It was a full moon night. He saw the Ganges living on the 24th January 1917 and his dead body was removed there for cremation on the 24th June 1918, just after seventeen months to a date. As a good Theosophist, he believed in the mystical number 17.

*SRIS CHANDRA MEMORIAL MEETING AT ALLAHABAD*

Sris Chandra's Memorial Meeting was held about a week after his death in the Anglo-Bengali School, (now Intermediate College) to express the regret and sorrow of the local Bengali community at his sudden death. The meeting was presided over by Mr. P. N. Banerji, Advocate,



Allahabad High Court, and was addressed by Mr. Nanda Kishore Mukerjee of *The Pioneer*. Mr. P. N. Banerjee had known Sris Chandra when he served at Bareilly. He paid an eloquent tribute to the memory of the deceased and referred to many qualities of his head and heart. He said that he never heard Sris Chandra *speak ill* of any one.

Referring to his untimely death, Mahamahopadhyaya Ganga Nath Jha has written :

"Sris Babu's premature death, therefore, has been a very serious loss, specially as there is no one left to take his place (in the field of Sanskrit, Philosophical and Legal literature).

Dr. G. N. Chakravarti had also written :

"Our relations were so intimate that in his passing away I feel that I have lost a brother whose place it has not been possible to supply all these years. Of his public life and of his vast and varied erudition it is needless for me to speak."

## CHAPTER XI

### *SRISH CHANDRA AS A SANSKRIT SCHOLAR*

That Sris Chandra was a great Sanskrit scholar has been admitted by eminent oriental scholars of India and Europe, including Prof. Max Müller and Prof. Jolly. Sris Chandra devoted much of his time to the study of the Sanskrit language. He was quite at home with the Sanskrit Grammar, Vedic literature, Puranas, Tantras, Upanishads and the Smriti works. Many are not aware that he was a special student of the Vedic literature. He studied the Vedas with the commentaries of the different commentators and with the translations in the different languages that were known to him. No Vedic scholar can do without consulting his interpretation of some of the Vedic hymns given in his *Daily Practice of the Hindus*.

#### *STUDY OF THE VEDAS AND THE PURANAS*

Sris Chandra also took a great interest in the Puranas. The study of the Puranas has been neglected by distinguished Sanskrit scholars. But Sris Chandra greatly insisted on the study of the Pauranic literature. How well he understood the spirit of the Puranas is evident from his essays given as Appendices to the Translation of the *Matsya Purana* in the Sacred Books of the Hindus series. He identified *Mahismati* with the modern

Broach. The reasons for this identification are given in one of the Appendices.

His mastery of the Hindu Law from its original sources is evident not only from his judgment of the Benares Caste case, but also from his translation of the *Yajnavalkya Smriti* with the commentary, *Mitakshara Achara Adhyaya* published in the Sacred Books of the Hindus series and the Introduction to the *Prayaschitta Adhyaya* of the same published in the *Sacred Laws of the Aryas*. The date of the commentator Vijnaneswara on the *Mitakshara* has been shown by him to be posterior to that of Madhava—the commentator of the *Parasara Smriti*. The lines on which the Hindu Law should be studied have been laid down by him in the Introduction to the translation of the *Achara Adhyaya*. He also identified the place of composition of the *Devala Smriti* with Daibal on the Indus above Karachi.

Sris Chandra identified the author of the *Hitopadesa*, Visnu Sharma, with Chanakya, the author of *Kautilya Arthasastra*. According to him, Vatsayana, the author of the *Kama Sutra*s, and commentator of the *Nyaya Sutra*s, was also Chanakya. In his opinion, Chanakya was also the author of the *Moksa Parvan* of the *Mahabharata*. His reasons for these identifications are given in a short paper on "Chanakya, the master sage of India" in *The Modern Review* for March 1918.

#### STUDY OF HINDU PHILOSOPHY

Sris Chandra was a keen student of Hindu religion and philosophy. He studied critically all the Six Schools

of the Hindu Philosophy and the Vedanta and Yoga systems very particularly. He popularised the study of the Yoga by editing Sabhapaty Swami's treatise on the subject, referred to by Prof. Max Müller in his "Six Schools of Hindu Philosophy"; by his *Easy Introduction to Yoga Philosophy*, of which several editions have been published; by his translations of the *Shiva Samhita* and *Gheranda Samhita*; by his foreword to the late Mr. Rama Prasad's translations of the *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali, published in the Sacred Books of [the Hindus series. He was shown and taught some of the processes of the *Hatha Yoga* by a *Sannyasin* who stayed at his house for some time. His works on the *Yoga Philosophy* are well known to all students of the subject.

The Right Hon'ble F. Max Müller thus referred to the *Yoga* treatise edited by Sris Chandra in his "Six Systems of Indian Philosophy" :—

"A writer with whom I have been in correspondence, the author of a short life of his teacher, Sabhapati Swamy born in Madras, in 1840, relates not only visions which the young student had—these might be accounted for like other visions—but a miracle which he performed in the presence of many people." (*The Collected Works of the Right Hon'ble F. Max Muller, Vol. XIX. The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy, London : 1912 p. 352*).

In the footnote to p. 354 of the above work we find :

"Om, a treatise on Vedantic Raja Yoga Philosophy, by the Mahatma Giana Guroo Yogi Sabhapati Swamy, edited by Siris Chandra Basu, student, Government College, Lahore, 1880."

Sris Chandra studied the *Vedanta Sutras* with most

of the commentaries available in his time. He translated Baladeva's commentary on the Vedānta Sūtras, published in the Sacred Books of the Hindus series. He had in contemplation the translation of the leading commentaries on the Vedānta Sūtras and had made some progress in this direction. These have been published in the Sacred Books of the Hindus Series under the title of "*Studies in the Vedānta Sūtras*," which contain also the interpretation of some of the *Vedānta Sūtras* as understood by him.

Sris Chandra helped in the publication of the commentary of Vijnana Bhikṣu on the Vedānta Sūtras in the Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series of Benares. Unfortunately, he did not succeed in procuring more than one manuscript of this commentary. According to him, Vijnana Bhikṣu was a Bengali and an eclectic philosopher. His commentary on the Sāṅkhya Philosophy is well known, but not so that on the Vedānta. He translated the first chapter of Vijnana Bhikṣu's commentary on the Vedānta Sūtras—a portion of which was published in the *Theosophist* of 1899.

#### STUDY OF THE UPANISHADS

When in the late eighties of the last century, Sris Chandra commenced the study of the Upanishads, there was no English translation of any of them with the commentary of Sāṅkara. He, therefore, undertook to translate Sāṅkara's commentary. But translations of only the *Iśa* and *Keṇa* were completed by him. These have been published in the Sacred Books of the Hindus series under the title of *Studies in the Upanishads*.

His translations of the Isa, Kena, Katha, Prasna, Mundaka, Mandukya, Chandogya and Brihadaranyaka Upanishads together with the commentary of Madhva have been published in the Sacred Books of the Hindus Series. These translations have been illuminated with many explanatory notes and have been greatly appreciated by Sanskrit scholars and students of the *Upanishads*.

In the introduction to his translation of the *Isa Upanishad* he wrote :

"The *Upanishads* when first presented to the scholars of the West, through the Latin translations of M. Anquetil du Perron, evoked an amount of enthusiasm perhaps second to none. But the aspect of the *Upanishads* that the West learnt, was the philosophical side of them—the side whose ablest exponent in India was the great Sankaracharya. The religious and devotional aspects of these Revelations were never brought into prominence before the Western scholars, and many forget that they have any such side. The great Vaisnava teachers like Ramanuja and Ananda Tirtha (Madhva) were exponents of the religious and devotional sides of these heirlooms of humanity. The masses of India are saturated with these Upanishad teachings in that aspect only."

So he gave a translation of the *Upanishads* "from the religious and devotional points of view, according to the school of Madhva Acharya." He claimed that the "attempt covers a different field altogether—a field not much known to the public either in the East or the West."

In comparing the interpretation of Sankara with that of Madhva, he said :

"The *Upanishads* were employed by Sankara as a weapon to fight the Buddhists. He, therefore, naturally

ignored or kept in the background the doctrines of faith and devotion and prominently laid stress on those texts which afforded an answer to the rationalistic atheism or agnosticism of the heterodox sects passing under the name of Buddhism, Jainism, etc. When Brahmanism was again established in India, the time came to revive these peculiar doctrines—essential features of every devotional religion. Madhva had not, therefore, far to go for them. The doctrine of Monotheism is in the Vedas, but later innovations had thrown it into the background.”

About the teaching of the *Isa Upanishad*, perhaps the first and the oldest of the *Upanishads*, he says:

“This *Isavasya* is perhaps the most mystical of all. As Madhva points out, it contains the great ineffable name of God, i. e., “I am that I am”: *Soham Asmi*.” (Introduction, p. ii, S. B. H. Vol. I.)

It is now a well-known fact that Prince Dara Shikoh translated fifty *Upanishads* into Persian with the help of the Pandits of his time. Sris Chandra procured a manuscript in Persian of Dara Shikoh’s translation of the *Upanishads* in Persian and was searching for other manuscripts to collate and publish the same with an English translation.

#### STUDY OF THE TANTRAS

It is only of late that Arthur Avalon, no other than the Hon’ble Justice Sir John Woodroffe, has taken seriously to the study of the *Tantras*. But Sris Chandra commenced their study in the eighties of the last century and translated the *Shiva Samhita*, which was the first *Tantra* to be translated into English. He was of opinion that due stress has not been laid on their study by the Western scholars, which was greatly to be regretted.

According to him, the importance of the *Tantras* was recognised in ancient India, for it is mentioned by Kulluka in his commentary on the *Manusamhita* that—

“*Sruti dvividha—Vaidiki, tantriki cha,*”

that is, there are two sorts of Revelation, namely, the Vedic and the Tantric. In his *Catechism of the Hindu Dharma*, he has greatly relied on the *Tantras* for his elucidation of the usages of the Hindus.

Sris Chandra was translating the *Mahanirvana Tantra*, when an agent of the late Babu Manmatha Nath Dutt, the publisher of the English translation of the *Ramayana*, came and stayed with him in Allahabad. He showed him his translation of the *Tantra*. That agent told this to Mr. Dutt, who possessing a press of his own and a host of translators in his pay, got that *Tantra* translated and printed. So Sris Chandra had to desist from the translation of the same.

Sris Chandra was also badly served by that agent in another respect. Sris Chandra was at that time translating the *Srimad Bhagavata*. It was a voluminous work. A few sheets of his translation were also printed. That agent informed Mr. Dutt about it. He immediately brought out the translation of that *Purana*. Sris Chandra used to say that Mr. Dutt and his agent played very mean tricks with him. This was how they paid back hospitality with a vengeance.

#### SANSKRIT GRAMMAR

Sris Chandra was always very partial to the study of Sanskrit Grammar, for he considered it to be the key



to unlock the treasures of the Sanskrit literature. How well he studied it is evident from his *Astadhyayi of Panini*, which is not a translation of any one work, but rather an original commentary on Panini's *Sutras*. In the opinion of some scholars, this work deserves to be translated into Sanskrit to facilitate the study of Panini's Grammar by Hindu students unacquainted with English.

On the appearance of the first part of the *Astadhyayi of Panini*, Prof. Max Müller wrote to him expressing his hope that Sris Chandra might succeed in finishing this "very useful work."

Professor Max Müller also warmly congratulated him on the completion of this monumental work. We have in a previous chapter referred to this letter written to Sris Chandra on the successful termination of Panini's Grammar.

It was in Sris Chandra's contemplation to write on the date of Panini—that is, an Introduction to the *Astadhyayi of Panini*. But pressure of other works prevented him from doing it. His edition and translation of the *Siddhanta Kaumadi*, in which he was assisted by his brother Major B. D. Basu, has been found very useful by University students.

The roots of the Sanskrit language number about 2000. Their conjugation is very difficult. He prepared in tabular form the conjugations of all the Sanskrit roots. To complete this work, he wanted to prepare an elaborate Index to all the conjugational forms. In his opinion, a work of this nature would facilitate the study of Sanskrit in the same manner and to the same extent

as a work of Mathematical Tables does in the case of a student of higher Mathematics.

#### SANSKRIT DICTIONARY

It is admitted on all hands that there is at present no good dictionary of the Sanskrit language. To prepare a good dictionary of that language, it is necessary to prepare first of all vocabularies in the different branches of Sanskrit learning. Every important work in Sanskrit has found a host of commentators to explain its meaning. So every subject must have a lexicon of its own, giving the interpretations of all known commentators of every word in it. He suggested the preparation of "a Dictionary of Hindu Philosophical Terms" and "a Dictionary of Hindu Legal Terms." Dictionaries of this nature will greatly facilitate the study of those two important branches of Sanskrit learning.

#### HINDU ASTRONOMY

Sris Chandra also took great interest in Astronomy and with the telescope spent nights in studying the movements of the Heavenly bodies. With Chambers's Mathematical tables, and nautical almanacs, he took great delight in solving astronomical problems. Naturally he could not neglect the study of Hindu Astronomy. Although he did not write anything on the subject himself, he helped Swami Vijnanananda—*alias* Babu Hari Prasanna Chatterji, B. A., L. C. E., who was at one time Engineer in the P. W. D. in the Central and United Provinces, in translating *Brihat Jataka* into English,

published in the Sacred Books of the Hindus Series and the *Surya Siddhanta* into Bengali.

In this country, no one can aspire to the distinction of *Acharya*, unless he not only studies but writes commentaries on the *Prasthanatraya*, namely, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Upanishads* and the *Vedanta Sutras* of Badarayana. He tried to attain to that distinction by his translations with explanatory and critical notes of the *Prasthanatraya*. Those who had the privilege of studying the *Gita* with him knew how well he had mastered it. He taught the *Gita* to an European Theosophist, named Mr. Fred Brooks, who afterwards committed suicide. Mr. Brooks undertook to translate it. He gave him every help to perform that task and so he did not publish any translation of the *Gita* himself. His deep erudition in the *Upanishads* and the *Vedanta Sutras* has been already mentioned before.

The *Acharyas* as a class were not partial to the study of Sanskrit Grammar. One has only to remember how Sankara sneered at it, when he composed his verse—

प्राप्ते सन्नहिते मरणे  
नहि नहि रक्षति ऊकृन् करणे ।

But such was not the case with him. He owed his scholarship in the different branches of the Sanskrit literature to the thorough mastery of the Grammar of that language. This, together with his Western culture, placed him in a position, in many respects higher than that of the *Acharyas*, and he understood much better than they, the spirit of the ancient sages of his country. He saw in the culture of ancient India, the highest aims of

humanity and in the diffusion of that culture the means of elevating young India above the narrow arena of ordinary life and petty circumstance.

The meaning and ideas of the ancient Indian civilisation were to be discovered in the Sanskrit language and literature and hence he emphasised the study of Sanskrit.

#### SPIRITUAL CULTURE

Sris Chandra also laid great stress on spiritual culture. Hence his leaning towards mysticism. He studied the works of the mystics of almost every country and age, mostly in the original. He projected a work named "Hours with the Persian Mystics." But this was not completed. He studied very regularly *The Occult Review*, *The Psychological Review*, *The Journal of the Psychical Research Society*, *The Spiritual Magazine* of Calcutta, etc.

How he was in search after the realisation of his higher self is evident from his study of the Yoga Philosophy, his practice of some of the processes mentioned in that Philosophy, experiments with the planchette, table-turning, hypnotic seances, meditation and contemplation every morning for an hour or so, and his writings on the subject, e.g., *An Easy Introduction to Yoga Philosophy*, "*Three Truths of Theosophy*" and "Foreword to Mr. Ernest Wood's translation of *Garuda Purana*", "Foreword to Mr. Rama Prasad's Translation of the Yoga Philosophy," etc.

At one time Sris Chandra intended to write on the Philosophy of the Spirit and called it "Atma Darsana." It was to have been written in aphorisms. He even prepared a few aphorisms on the subject. The first aphorism was—





अथातः आत्मजिज्ञासा ।

Atman was defined to be

ज्ञानानन्दैक गुणमात्मा ।

This work was to have been based on the *Upanishads*, the *Vedanta Sutras*, the *Gita* and the speculations of the Western Philosophers—especially of Germany.

#### THE TERM HINDU

There are many sects amongst the Christians. But they all call themselves Christians. It was the opinion of Sris Chandra that the members of the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj committed a great mistake in not calling themselves Hindus. They should identify themselves with Hindus. To set up different *Samajas* is a sign of disintegration of the Hindu race and not of cohesion.

#### AESTHETIC CULTURE

While Sris Chandra laid great stress on heart culture and spiritual culture, he did not neglect aesthetic culture. He hated everything shabby and slovenly. The house which he built in Allahabad shows his aesthetic taste.

#### RENAISSANCE IN INDIA

India is said to be in Renaissance. In that movement in Europe, "Humanism was the intellectual centre," and the Humanists, "its conscious pioneers and promoters." By them "the buried classics were disinterred and preserved, they were diffused by the printing press, they were made available by Grammar and Lexicon." (Hugh Watt on *Humanists in E. B. E.*, Vol. VI).

In India Sris Chandra wanted to do what the Humanists did in the Renaissance. The buried classics in

Sanskrit were being disinterred and preserved by many before him. But he found that the Vedic, Philosophical and legal lores of the Ancient Hindus were not made available for want of proper Grammar and Lexicon. Sris Chandra, therefore, set to work at them. "No one knew Sanskrit who did not know Panini." He translated and simplified it.

Kant also "undertook to write a philosophical dictionary, evidently recognising the important part which verbal terms play in philosophy." (Merz's *European Thought in the Nineteenth century*, p. 347.)

Mr. H. G. Wells, in his work named "*Mankind in the Making*" (1st Edition, p. 201) writes :

"There is scarcely a work left in Latin or Greek that has not been translated into and assimilated and more or less completely superseded by English, French, and German works ; but the schoolmaster, heedless of these things, still arrests the pupil at the old portal, fumbles with the keys, and partially opens the door into a ransacked treasure-chamber."

But this does not apply to Sanskrit. There was and still is a vast field of work in Sanskrit literature, specially in the departments of Grammar and Lexicon. As regards the Sanskrit Lexicon, Sris Chandra thought that there should be first of all dictionaries of the different branches of Sanskrit learning. We have already referred to his scheme of a Sanskrit Dictionary, which he wanted to be as reliable and exhaustive as possible.

Again, Sris Chandra wanted to popularise Sanskrit learning by producing reliable translations of well known Sanskrit works. Mere "wooden-legged" translations will not do.



## CHAPTER XII

### *HIS VIEWS ON SEVERAL TOPICS*

#### *ON THE HINDU LAW*

Sris Chandra held that the Hindus moved with the times, so Hindu Law was never codified and stereotyped as at present. This explains different Smritis for different *yugas*. (Cf: Telang's Deccan College Lectures).

With the Muhammadan invasion of India, there was felt the need of new kinds of Smritis for that age. Hence we get the Devala Smriti, the first of its kind.

Sris Chandra was of opinion that Muhammadanism influenced Hindu Jurisprudence. So did also Roman Law.

As he knew both Arabic and Sanskrit very well, he was in a position to show the influence of Muhammadanism on Hindu Law.

Sris Chandra also thought that there was a vast field for the study of Comparative Jurisprudence.

#### *ON POLITICS*

In India and in other countries also the royal road to fame, distinction, wealth and social status is *politics*. "The last resort of scoundrels is patriotism." That may be true or not in other countries, but it seems to be so in some cases in India. Politicians find it very difficult to be thoroughly honest. Their aim is expediency, whereas that of philosophers love of truth.

As Srish Chandra went on studying Philosophy in general, and that of the Hindus in particular, his interest in politics decreased.

In subject India there ought not to be any party politics. In its place politicians foment interprovincial jealousies and try to play off communities and castes against one another.

He considered it a redeeming feature of English politics, that the private lives of most of the prominent politicians were above reproach and suspicion. They did not carry any influence with the people, if once they were found guilty of immoral conduct. Parnell, the uncrowned king of Ireland, was hurled down from his pedestal when his intrigues with Mrs. D'Shea became known. Similar was the treatment meted out to Sir Charles Dilke.

But in India, we sometimes find men of notoriously immoral character honored by the public. Newspaper editors are also sometimes appointed from amongst men of this type. While a financial speculator like Jabez Balfour had to lead the life of an exile, in India such men are not always despised—nay, they are sometimes considered fit to be associated with.

India is, of course, a happy hunting ground for the failures of England. Men of broken fortune come here to shake the pagoda tree and make money in as little time as possible.

It is the character behind the man which tells. Public movements in India sometimes fail, because some of those who pose as leaders are not honest and sincere and some have even led notoriously immoral lives.

## HIS METHOD OF READING

Sris Chandra was against desultory reading. From his school days he made friends with great writers; Shakespeare, Milton and Scott were his favourites and he read them over and over again before he passed the Entrance Examination. His retentive memory was such that he could recite word for word many a poem of his favourite authors. He thoroughly absorbed a good many of the masterpieces of English literature.

But as some lighter sauce is needed to make heavy food digestible, so to relish literary food, he read many a work of fiction. The reading of Don Quixote, Gulliver's Travels, Arabian Nights, Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, Lytton, Cooper, Captain Marryat, Trollope was greatly enjoyed by him. It was this lighter sauce which produced his *Folk Tales of Hindustan*.

As heavy bodies sink to the bottom, but lighter ones float on the surface, so his *Folk Tales of Hindustan* is better known and appreciated than his Panini, Vedanta Sutras, Upanishads or Mitakshara. No work of any Indian author, excepting those of Rabindranath Tagore, has been translated into so many different languages as the *Folk Tales of Hindustan*. It has been translated into Bengali, Hindi, Telegu, Marathi, Kanarese and German. It has also been rendered into Sindhi and is ready for the press. The Bengali translation was done by Srimati Santa Devi and Srimati Seeta Devi and edited by Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee. When the *Folk Tales* were being published in *The Modern Review*, they attracted the

attention of the late Mr. W. T. Stead, who in his *Review of Reviews* (of London) wrote :

"*The Modern Review* contains month by month stories of a type that recall the delightful romances of the Arabian Nights. In the September number Shaikh Chilli tells the story of Prince Mahbub which vies with the stories of Princess Scheherzadi."

Mr. M. Longworth Daines, I. C. S., (Retd.) in the course of a review of this book in the *Folk Lore* of London for June 30th, 1909, wrote :

"In this little volume ten stories from North India, which have already appeared in *The Modern Review*, are reprinted in a convenient form. The stories are told in good English... The stories are excellent examples of the tales of wonder, adventure, and enchantment that circulate throughout the Mohammedan world... The town of Janjal Nagari in the Land of Darkness is a sort of Gotham with features suggesting Laputa, and the combination of extreme folly with philosophical disputation is very effective. The more elaborate stories are all good of their class, and 'The Seven Princes,' 'Vikram and the Faquir' and 'Prince Mahbub' are well worthy of association with our old favourites from *Alif Laila*.

"It is to be hoped that Shaikh Chilli will continue his collections, and make known to the world some more gems from his treasure-house."

#### HIS ECONOMY IN STUDY

Sris Chandra was an insatiable reader and possessed a very retentive memory. He also knew Pitman's system of Shorthand, which he improved for his own use. He used to jot down notes and his ideas in Shorthand and in this way he economised time in study.

His reading was very wide and very deep. There was hardly any important branch of knowledge the elementary

principles of which he did not try to thoroughly understand. So it was that he came to be possessed of novel ideas on many subjects. Writes the author of *An Introduction to Mathematics* in the Home University Series :

"Novel ideas are more apt to spring from an unusual assortment of knowledge—not necessarily from vast knowledge, but from a thorough conception of the methods and ideas of distinct lines of thought."

#### HIS RELIGIOUS VIEWS

As a student, Sris Chandra first of all was attracted towards Christianity, while reading in the Lahore Mission School. His mother became alarmed at his leaning towards Christianity and transferred him from the Mission School to the Government School, Lahore.

While Swami Dayananda Saraswati came to Lahore, Sris Chandra was drawn towards the Arya Samaj movement. Thus writes his class-fellow Lala Shiv Dayal :

"In the same year (1877) Swami Dayanand Saraswati paid his first visit to Lahore, gave a series of lectures which created commotion in the student community, and most of us regularly attended his lectures. Sris's genius now began to show itself. He studied books on religion and scientific subjects and took an active part in the debates, which became common in those days and specially the weekly meetings which were then held in the Brahmo Samaj."

This contact with Swami Dayananda took him to the study of the Vedas in the original. Sris Chandra also worked with the Arya Samaj, but he could not lead himself to believe in the infallibility of the Vedas or their being revealed books.

At one time of his life, Sris Chandra called himself a Brahmo. In his house in the city, the Brahmos of Lahore used to meet and conduct divine service. Men like Babu Navin Chandra Roy, Satyanand Agnihotri, Ralla Ram, Kasi Ram, Sobharam and others attended. But Sris Chandra soon drifted away from the Brahmo Samaj,

From the time when Col. Olcott and Madame Blava-ty visited Lahore, Sris Chandra became a staunch Theosophist and established a Theosophical Society at Lahore. He also helped in the establishment of other Theosophical Societies in different towns of the United Provinces.

The glamour of the eloquence of Mrs. Besant, the President of the Theosophical Society, bewitched him. He was a very devoted follower of her and no one worked so wholeheartedly and unselfishly for her as he did.

If Dayananda Saraswati was instrumental in arousing his interest in the study of the sacred scriptures of the Hindus, Sabhapaty Swami and the Theosophical Society stimulated him to investigate the mysteries of life after death. Mysticism had great charm for him. He was often imposed upon by scheming and designing persons, for he was of childlike simplicity and therefore it was not difficult for them to bamboozle him.

Sris Chandra studied the works of mystics of all ages and climes, and experienced some queer things with the planchette writing, table-turning and hypnotic seances. All these troubles he cheerfully bore to realize his higher self. In his house lived many Sannyasins who showed him

the different practices of the *Hatha Yoga*, such as the *asanas*, *neti*, *dhauti*, *pranayama*, etc.

His intimacy with Swami Vivekananda and his followers was so great that at Ghazipur, Benares and Allahabad, they always used to stay with him. Swami Vijnanananda had been an Engineer before he joined Vivekananda's party. He was also one of his friends and at his suggestion he wrote the treatise on Water Works and *Surya Sidhanta* in Bengali, and translated the *Brihatjataka* and *Devi Bhagavat* into English.

Sris Chandra always searched for Sannyasins and Jnanis. In Allahabad, he found in Baba Madhoda a saint deeply versed in the lore of Sufi mystics. He wrote his biography in the pages of the *Dawn*, which was afterwards translated into Bengali and published in the *Prabasi Magazine* and *Banger Bahire Bangali*.

A Muhammadan Faquir in Allahabad named Dariya Shah greatly impressed him. Sris Chandra used to narrate the story that when he first came to Allahabad to practise Law in 1886, one day when he was driving in a carriage with another pleader to the Court he saw Dariya Shah lying on the foot-path of Johnstonganj. He had heard the name of Dariya Shah. So he got down from the carriage, as also did his friend, who, as it was then drizzling, unfolded an umbrella over his head. Dariya Shah, seeing the pleader with the umbrella over his head, was greatly enraged with him and said:

"*Kya Faquiron ka samne chhatra le kar ata hai ?*" "So, he comes before faquirs with an umbrella over his head?"

But to Siris Chandra, he said, "*Ja, tera bhala hoga.*" "Go, it will be well with thee."

When Dariya Shah died, he paid for the erection of his tomb.

In Benares, he was a great favourite of Swami Bhaskarananda, whose last photograph was taken in his company. He also wrote his biographical sketch in the *Dawn*

#### THE STUDY OF HISTORY

At one time, Srish Chandra was very fond of studying historical works. But the study of History convinced him that History as written by Europeans was more fiction agreed upon, rather than anything else. So he said, why should not one read fiction rather than History. He read Scott, Dickens, Thackeray and other renowned novelists. He understood long before then what Merz said :

"The real historians of the people are, however, the great novelists, and it is interesting to note that the modern social and historical novel made its first appearance simultaneously with the rise of modern historiography..." (*History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century*, Vol. III, p. 32 note.)







## CHAPTER XIII

### *SRIS CHANDRA AS A WRITER*

The literary career of Srish Chandra began from his school days. While yet a school boy, he composed in English *Lay of Liberty* in 1876. In 1880 he edited the work on Yoga Philosophy of Sabhapati Swami under the title of *A Treatise on Vedantic Raj Yoga Philosophy by the Mahatma Giana Guroo Yogi Sabhapati Swami*. He was then a student of the Lahore Government College. He added a biographical sketch of Sabhapati Swami also to the above book. This work has been referred to by the Right Hon'ble F. Max Muller in his *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy* (collected works, Vol. XIX, p. 352).

It was followed by his *Physical Geography* written in Urdu for school students, which was published from Lahore in 1881. For the benefit of the students of the Punjab, he also published "Middle School Examination Papers" in 1883.

In the same year came out his *Indian National Songs and Lyrics*, which was highly appreciated. It was published by Mr. N. R. Nand, Manager, National Book Society, Lahore. It was reviewed in the *Regenerator of Aryavarta* of Lahore (Monday, Oct. 8, 1883) in the following terms:

"We have received a copy of the *Indian National Songs and Lyrics*. The title page of the pamphlet is printed in golden letters and bears the standard of the Indian nation—a standard

that carries on it the image of the Sun which illumines the world. Most of the poems are from the pen of Babu Srish Chandra Basu, B. A., Vakil, High Court, Allahabad, and are such as are calculated to infuse a new spirit for national progress in the reader's mind. The get-up of the pamphlet reflects great credit on the able and energetic compiler Mr. N. R. Nand. The book is dedicated to the youths of India."

As has been pointed out before, his *Folk Tales of Hindustan* won the praise of the late Mr. W. T. Stead, the Editor of the *Review of Reviews* of London.

About this book, *The Pioneer* of Allahabad (22nd Dec. 1912) wrote :

"Serious scholars are generally known to be devoid of what is called 'wit and humour.' But his (Sris Chandra's) *Folk Tales of Hindusthan* shows how cleverly he can wield his pen for writing stories interesting and entertaining to the old and the young alike. These stories have been published by him under the pseudonym of *Shaikh Chilli*. We may safely predict that like the Arabian Nights Entertainments, these stories will be eagerly read in ages to come by all classes of people."

That he was a profound Sanskrit scholar is admitted by all. His translation of *Astadhyayi of Panini* and the *Siddhanta Kaumudi* of Bhattoji Dikshita would rank as monumental works in the field of Oriental learning as long as the people would continue to take interest in Sanskritic studies. If he had not written any other work except *Astadhyayi of Panini*, his name would have remained immortal in the field of Sanskrit learning. It took him eight long years to complete the translation of Panini. It is a wonder how he could find time from his official duties to finish this self-imposed task. When Prof. Max Muller congratulated him on "the successful

termination of Panini's Grammar," he rightly observed: "It was a great undertaking and you have done your part of the work admirably."

Though the translation of *Siddhanta Kaumudi* was undertaken by Professor Horace Hayman Wilson, it was never published. So Sris Chandra "by completing the translation of this important work, has placed Sanskritists under great obligations to him." In reviewing this work Rai Bahadur Narendra Nath Sen in his *Indian Mirror* observed:

"This is a standard work on Sanskrit grammar, and Sanskrit scholars spend at least a dozen years in mastering its intricacies, Mr. Sris Chandra Basu deserves the best thanks of all Sanskritists for making Sanskrit grammar easy by editing and translating with explanatory notes Bhattoji Diksit's *Siddhanta Kaumudi*. It is a voluminous work of 2400 pages, Royal octavo."

We have, in a previous chapter, referred to his deep knowledge of Sanskrit. It has been well said by Dr. G. N. Chakravarti: "The large number of works which bear his name as author testify to his intellectual ability and versatility." Again Dr. Ganganath Jha has also said: "Sris Babu was such a voluminous writer that had he been spared to the world of scholars for another ten years, there would have been left scarcely anything worth doing in the field of Sanskrit Philosophical and Legal literature." His interest in Sanskrit Philosophical literature is apparent from the translations of the following *Upanishads*:

1. *Isa*
2. *Kena*
3. *Katha*
4. *Prasna*
5. *Mundaka*
6. *Mandukya*



Vol. I. of the Sacred Books  
of the Hindus.

7. *Chandogya*—Vol. III of S. B. H.

8. *Brihadaranyaka*

He also translated the “Vedanta Sutra of Badarayana” with Govinda Bhashya of Baladeva and copious explanatory and critical notes. It is also included in the *Sacred Books of the Hindus*, Vol. V.

His interest in Yoga was also well known. From his College days, he was an earnest student of Yoga Philosophy. His translations of Yoga literature include :

1. *Easy Introduction to Yoga Philosophy*
2. *Shiva Samhita*
3. *Gheranda Samhita*
4. *Introduction to Mr. Ram Prasad's translation of Yoga Sutras of Patanjali.*

His *Daily Practice of the Hindus* won high appreciation from various scholars. Dr. A. K. Coomarswamy, in reviewing this work, wrote as follows :

“This unpretentious little volume is one of quite remarkable interest and importance. For the first time it is made easy for the outsider to understand, from an actual acquaintance, with the daily ritual of a devout Hindu of the old school, the meaning and the method of Hindu spiritual culture.

“We strongly recommend this little volume to all interested in mental culture, or who wish to know more of Hinduism as it really is.”

As an ardent Theosophist, he propounded the beauties of Theosophy in his *Three Truths of Theosophy*.

His *Compass of Truth* also shows “how his active mind was in eager pursuit of realising the true nature of the higher self.”

## HINDI SHORTHAND

Shrish Chandra was well known as an inventor of *Hindi Shorthand*. In 1907 he brought out his *Hindi Shorthand* or रेखाक्षर अर्थात् हिन्दीकी संक्षेप-लेखप्रणाली। It was printed by Stephen Austin & Sons, Ltd., Hertford, and published by the Nagri Pracharini Sabha, Benares. In the Foreward, he wrote :

"At the request of the energetic Vice-President of the Nagri Pracharini Sabha, Babu Syam Sundar Das, this first book of Hindi Shorthand is placed before the public. It is based on Pitman's system of Shorthand, with such modifications as are suited to the Devanagari characters. Several attempts have been made before to introduce Shorthand in India for some of the vernacular languages. But all these attempts have hitherto been more or less failures, owing to there being no demand for it. The conditions of India are not the same as in Europe or America, where public speaking, whether from the pulpit, bar or Parliament, or public platform, has to be reported. Another reason why the former attempts failed might be in the complicated system which they introduced. In the present work the system has been extremely simplified with the help of five straight lines and eight curves. This method is put before the public. Another novel feature of this attempt is that vowels are not represented by positions, but by distinct marks, as experience has taught us that positions are seldom regarded in actual reporting. Hindi, like Sanskrit, has many conjunct consonants. We have made one simple rule for all these conjunct consonants, which, in my opinion, will be found convenient. It took Sir Isaac Pitman sixty years to perfect his system with the help of those who have been using his method. We cannot expect that our system can become perfect till it is widely practised and its shortcomings made manifest. However, we put this forward as a tentative measure, the details of which will be filled in as experience grows, the main outlines remaining the same. Great

credit is due to the Nagri Pracharini Sabha for undertaking this work. Nor would this have been an accomplished fact but for the interest taken and time devoted by my young friend Pandit Nikka Misra in writing out this book."

*SRIS CHANDRA AS A WRITER OF BENGALI*

Sris Chandra picked up Bengali by reading Bengali books taught by his mother. He had no school education in it. His only writing in Bengali was an article on *Sufism* in *Prabasi*, Vol. III.

In 1875 a Bengali Dramatic Company visited Lahore. Sris Chandra attended the performances of this Company and tried his hand at writing a farce in Bengali, caricaturing the doings of the Bengali opium-smokers of Lahore. He dictated to a Bengali class-fellow of his, to write down what he said in Bengali. The MS. was afterwards destroyed. It contained humorous sketches of some of those Bengali opium-smokers. One couplet of this farce was remembered by his brother:

কি ছার এ প্রাণ, যদি গুলিতে\* দি টান ।  
গোলা গুলি কামানাদি ভূণের সমান ॥

*HIS JOURNALISTIC ACTIVITIES*

Srish Chandra had a facile pen. He contributed many articles to several newspapers and magazines of the time. He was, as we have seen, also instrumental in bringing the *Tribune* of Lahore into existence and was its first Assistant Editor.

In 1882 Mr. Ratan Chand Bary, an educated Punjabi of Lahore and a friend of Sris Chandra, started the *Arya*.

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\* Small pill of opium is called গুলি by opium-smokers.



From the very beginning of the career of the *Arya*, Sris Chandra helped Mr. Bary by contributing to this paper. There was hardly any issue of the *Arya* in which Sris Chandra's writing did not appear. In the *Arya* (Vol. I,) he wrote about—"Brahmoism," "Brahmo Marriage," "Theory of Evolution from the Aryan point of view" and several other important articles.

When in 1883, the *Regenerator of Aryavarta* was started, Sris Chandra also helped it by his contributions. In this paper Sris Chandra criticised the paper of Mr. Ajudhia Prasad, *Occultism*. Mr. Ajudhia Prasad was the President of the Ferozpur Arya Samaj. Sris Chandra's *Indian National Songs and Lyrics* was reviewed in the *Regenerator of Aryavarta* of 8th October 1883 in high terms.

He was also a frequent contributor to *The Day in India* of Allahabad and *The Dawn* of Calcutta. He wrote a biographical sketch of Swami Bhaskarananda in *The Dawn*.

While practising as a Vakil in the Allahabad High Court, he also edited the *Indian Union*, owned by the Hon'ble Pandit Ajodhya Nath. While he acted as the Editor of this paper, its number of readers increased to about 1200. The services of Sris Chandra as the Editor of this paper were recognised by the Hon'ble Pandit Ajodhya Nath. He edited the paper for three years and during that period he contributed many important and useful articles to its columns. "Scenes from Real Life" published in it created a great sensation at the time.

#### SRIS CHANDRA AS AN EDUCATIONIST

Sris Chandra had begun his life as the first Head Master of the Model School, Lahore. After passing the

Vakilship Examination of the Allahabad University, he had to leave the educational line. But he was always fond of teaching. After his retirement from the Judicial Service, he used to take delight in teaching his youngest son. He also took great interest in founding several educational institutions. In Lahore, he was the Secretary of the Bengali School. In Allahabad, he established the Girls' Free High School—the first Indian institution of its kind in that city. He suggested the idea of having a building for the school and his was the largest contribution towards the building fund of the school.

While he was at Bareilly, he was instrumental in establishing the Edward High School there. Again, during his stay at Benares, he was one of the first Trustees of the Central Hindu College, which formed the nucleus of the Benares Hindu University. He was also one of the Trustees of the Harish Chandra High School.

After the death of Dr. Satish Chandra Banerjee he was elected Vice-President of the Anglo-Bengali School (now Intermediate College) of Allahabad. He was a member of its Committee and helped the school with donations and presentations of a large number of books.

#### *AS A SOCIAL REFORMER*

It is caste which stands in the way of all social reforms. Be it the abolition of child marriage, or remarriage of widows, journeys to foreign countries by sea, inter-dining with men of alien faith or nationality,—everything hinges on caste. Do away with caste, which stands at

the root of all evils, and every reform will be possible, just as the day follows the night.

In 1885, when Sris Chandra was practising as a pleader in Meerut, the late Mr. B. M. Malabari visited that city in connection with his scheme of social reform and made his acquaintance. Sris Chandra supported Malabari's scheme by writing a series of very learned papers on Hindu social reforms in the pages of *The Arya* of Lahore. Some of these papers were revised and afterwards printed in the *Theosophist* for 1898.

His views on sea-voyage are expressed in the well-known Caste case of Benares. He had the courage to send his younger brother to England to study medicine and compete for the I. M. S. When his brother returned from England, he stood the test of social boycott of the Hindu public of Allahabad.

All his papers on social reform deserve to be reprinted in book form for the use of those who advocate social reform in India.

#### RELIGIOUS REFORM

From the study of Indian religious movements Sris Chandra came to the conclusion that no Hindu religious reformer can succeed in India, unless he believes in Re-incarnation and uses Sanskrit for purposes of propaganda. A masterly knowledge of Sanskrit is a *sine qua non* for those who wish to propagate any new creed in this country. Even Buddhism and Jainism had to admit this—as is evident from the fact, that although preachers of those faiths at first made use of Pali to propagate

their doctrines, yet they had also ultimately to use Sanskrit for that purpose.

*SRIS CHANDRA AS A PERSIAN SCHOLAR*

It is not generally known that Sris Chandra was not only a sound Sanskrit scholar, but also a great Persian scholar. As a student he took up the Persian language and many of his class-fellows were surprised to find him reading Persian books. Says his class-fellow Mr. Shiv Dayal :

"We were all surprised to see that Sris Chandra, a Bengali boy, took up Persian instead of Sanskrit."

In the Lahore Government College Sris Chandra took up Arabic, and he was the only student of Arabic in the College. As such he attracted the attention of Dr. Leitner, who was himself a Persian scholar.

His knowledge of Arabic helped him to decide the complicated Wahabi case of Ghazipur. The question to be decided by him was : Could the Wahabis pray in the same mosque with the Sunnis ? To decide this complicated case, he had to read the whole Moslem legal literature. "Extensive reading of almost the whole literature of Mahommedan jurisprudence in the original Arabic for which he had to get books published outside India, in Mahommedan countries such as Egypt and Persia, took him nearly a year to decide this important case. It is a decision which is of great value to Indian lawyers, for it has settled, once for all, a very moot point of Mahommedan Law." This judgment formed the theme of his book, *The Right of Wahabis to Pray in the same Mosque with*

*the Sunnis*. It was an important judgment on a very disputed question of Muhammedan Law. His interpretation has been appreciated by many jurists.

He also rendered into English *Risala-i-Haq-Numa* of Muhammad Dara Shikoh under the title of *The Compass of Truth*. In the preface of this book, he writes :

"This is a small pamphlet in Persian called *Risala-i-Haq-Numa* (*haq*-Truth : *numa*-pointing ; as a compass points out the North, so this points out the truth). It is from the pen of that enlightened prince Dara Shikoh, the eldest son of Shah-i-Jahan, who died in 1659 A. D. In this book the author describes the four planes of existence, namely, the physical (*Nasut*), the super-physical (*Malakut*) Blissful (*Jabarut*) and the Divine (*Lahut*), corresponding respectively with the four states of human consciousness, known as waking, dreaming, deep sleep and the trance-consciousness."

## CHAPTER XIV

### *HIS CHARACTER*

Sris Chandra was a man of high character. He was of a very unassuming and retiring nature. He did not like self-advertisement. So he could not shine as a man of the world. For his retiring nature he was not well-known to the public and his merits were not appreciated by them. If he had advertised himself, his name would have by this time been known to the people of the whole of India.

He was not anxious for material welfare. He wanted to serve his country and the goddess of learning. So he gave up the prospects of the Bar and joined the Judicial Service. Thus about his appointment, one of his admirers wrote :

“Although this appointment was some gain to him in the early struggling years at the Bar, it was no gain to us, because before long he was drafted on to the permanent Government service to the great loss of the Bar.”

As he was not a pushing man, so his works are not well appreciated by the public. If he had blown his own trumpet, then his real merits would have been appreciated.

He was like a Sannyasin, though living in the world. Dr. G. N. Chakravarti thus writes about him :

“Although living in the family, he had all the characteristics of a real Sannyasi, for the life of manifold possessions and material self-gratification had little attraction for him, his sole passion having been to serve his fellow-men and to conduct his researches

in the realm of religious literature and philosophy. With all these high attainments, he was so modest and unassuming that except to his personal friends his greatness of character stood unrevealed."

Dr. Chakravarti goes on to say :

"His habits were so simple and his dress so unconventional that he was often the object of affectionate merriment to his friends regarding the almost ascetic nature of his surroundings. His life was marked by a radiance of happiness which had its source in regions veiled from the mortal eye and I have a vivid recollection of how his presence almost invariably served to create an atmosphere of purity and joy."

His earnestness also appealed to many of his friends, as Dr. Ganga Nath Jha says:

"The trait in his character that appealed to most people was his earnestness; in fact, some of us thought that he was a little too earnest; and unfortunately this was proved to be too true, in that it was his earnestness for work that was directly responsible for the serious break-down that resulted in his death. He had a wonderful control over his feelings."

Another friend of his, Rai Bahadur Shiva Prasad, thus writes of his character :

"He was a sincere friend and courteous and sympathetic in manners. He was always ready to help the distressed. He was a true Theosophist and a man of liberal views and of high and noble ideals."

#### *SOME OF HIS PERSONAL TRAITS AND CHARACTERISTICS*

One of the marked personal traits of Sris Chandra was his ardent *love of liberty*. He imbibed this love of liberty when he was a mere school boy. While in school,

he composed verses in English and printed them under the title of *Lay of Liberty*.

[This was printed in a Press named "Mitchell Press" in 1876. It was a small Press. He also did the work of a compositor of types in printing it.]

INDIAN NATIONAL SONGS AND LYRICS

In his *Lay of Liberty*, Sris Chandra wrote thus :

"Rise up, O Aryas, O Moslems arise;  
Ye Christians, ye Buddhists and Parsis arise;  
Rise up Bengalees, Punjabees arise,  
Mahrattas, Madrasees, Gujratis arise;  
Shake off all torpor's chain  
Break it with might and main,  
Join ye like brothers in union's strong ties."

His second characteristic was his intense love of justice. He hated injustice in any form or shape. It was this which ruined his career in the Punjab. His intense love of justice led him to take a prominent part in the Students' Rebellion in Lahore, which ultimately brought upon him the displeasure of the higher authorities.

He did not read any newspaper for twelve years, for, as he used to say, his blood boiled with indignation when he read of acts of injustice perpetrated on poor Indians, because for their wrongs there was no redress.

It was this love of justice again which did not make him a *persona grata* with many members of the Bar. To safeguard the interests of clients he tried his best to compromise cases.

*Maitreya*—love for all creatures, was the ideal of



Sris Chandra. He never willingly injured any one. He bore love for all creatures.

He laid special stress on "heart-culture," which he said was neglected in the pursuit of physical, mental and moral culture in the modern plan of education.

His heart overtowered his head, for which reference may be made to Mrs. Besant's testimony in the *Adyar Bulletin*.

#### *IDEAL LIFE vs. SUCCESSFUL LIFE*

In Nature we find the survival of the fittest. The fittest is not necessarily the best or the ablest. So a successful man not be the most perfect or an ideal man. We should try to have an ideal life. It was a beautiful conception of the Buddhists to represent the Lord Buddha as taking different births to practise to perfection one particular virtue in one life. In one life he showed the highest ideal of compassion, in another, of generosity, and so on.

We should try to possess in one life of ours, all the different virtues for which Buddha had to take so many births, as mentioned in the Jataka stories.

It was to attain to this ideal or perfect life, that Sris Chandra leaned towards mysticism and studied the religions of different countries and peoples.

#### *"SAINTS ARE NOT HEROES"*

Sris Chandra was a man of very unassuming and retiring nature. It was therefore that he was not so well known to the public as his merits deserved. It is said

that "works by which one lives, do not live." That can hardly be said of his literary products. That work is generally "successful" from the worldly point of view which has marketable value. His works did not belong to that category and therefore were and are appreciated by those only who possess the capacity to know and understand their worth.

He belonged to that class of whom the Poet has said:

"...strong minds  
Are often those of whom the noisy world  
Hears least; else surely this man had not left  
His graces unrevealed and unproclaimed.  
But, as the mind was filled with inward light,  
So not without distinction had he lived  
Beloved and honoured—far as he was known."

*NOT A PRACTICAL MAN, LACKING IN COMMON SENSE*

When Sris Chandra left the Bar and took service, he was considered a visionary, an idealist, not a practical man, lacking in common sense.

The Hindu seer says—

अजरामरवत् प्राज्ञो विद्यामयं च चिन्तयेत्।  
गृहीत इव केशेषु मृत्युना धर्ममाचरेत्॥

Sris Chandra did not take thought (चिन्ता) for *Artha*. Otherwise he tried to carry out to the letter the above precept of the Hindu sage.

*HIS TOLERATION AND CATHOLICITY*

Sris Chandra was a man of broad and liberal views. He was not a man of the orthodox type, but was well known for his toleration and catholicity. He did not

confine himself to the study of the Hindu scriptures, but took a great interest in the study of scriptures of all religions.

He had a hatred of every thing mean and contemptible. He also had a fine sensibility and avoided giving pain to others. Hence he at times suffered for it very acutely.

#### *HIS SOCIABILITY*

Sris Chandra was an institution in himself. His hospitality drew many strangers to find shelter under his roof. As Allahabad is the heart of modern progressive India, as Benares is of ancient India, so many people would visit Allahabad and find proverbial hospitality in his house. Thus he made acquaintance with several persons from different provinces of India, tried to learn their manners and customs and find means to make one of the dreams of his life, *viz.*, Indian Unity—a reality. He was never so happy as when playing the host. He was well known for his sociability.

#### *SACRIFICE*

He considered the law of sacrifice above that of justice. It was a common saying of his that no great cause has ever been achieved without sacrifice. He showed this in his life when he sacrificed his prospects at the Bar and took service, to serve what he considered a nobler cause than making money.

#### *WORK FOR THE SAKE OF WORK*

He followed the principle laid down in the following verse of the Gita:

### कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।

He used to say : "If some one has to do it, why not I?" He did not spare himself in any way to do a thing which, he considered, ought to be done. And so no drudgery was irksome to him, for he faced it very cheerfully. So he undertook the task of making an Index to all forms of 2000 Sanskrit Verbal roots. This work he has left in MSS.

In his life, Sris Chandra met with many disappointments. That did not sour his temper. He was disappointed with the conduct of many of those whom he looked upon as his friends, for they not only proved ungrateful for several acts of kindness and benefits received at his hands, but tried to injure him. But this did not make him a misanthrope.

His disposition was very charitable, so he never spoke ill of any one but looked to the good side even of his ill-wisher.

### PHILOSOPHIC CONTENTMENT

The very first verse of *Isavasyopanisad*

ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वं यत् किञ्च जगत्यां जगत् ।

तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथा मा गृधः कस्यस्विद् घनम् ॥

was more or less his motto throughout life. This led him to "philosophic contentment," and to have implicit faith in the goodness of God. "Not in my own way, not in thy own way, but in His own way, the Lord God

will provide." He used to say that his whole life bore testimony to that truth. God has always supplied his wants and needs. Why should he be covetous of more than what was good or needed for him. As no great cause has ever been achieved without sacrifice, so it was his wont to say that no good cause ever suffered for lack of money.

Lastly, we should not omit to mention his devotion to his mother, which was almost proverbial. He used to say that he owed everything in his life to his mother. She filled his mind with noble ideas, and instilled in him a sense of duty, for which he was grateful to her and worshipped her.

#### VEIN OF PESSIMISM IN SRIS CHANDRA

Sris Chandra was born with a silver spoon in his mouth and was the pet of and received much attention from the leaders of the Indian society of Lahore during the life time of his father. But when his father died, he had reached the age when he could understand the nature of the calamity that had befallen him. He realised in his life that everything material was a shadow and not a substantial thing. He, therefore, found solace in the study of the *Upanishads*, the *Vedanta* and the *Gita*. This accounts for the vein of pessimism in him. But very few knew of his sorrows and troubles. He acted on what a poet has said :

"My hopes and joys let others share ;  
In grief, I shall play the miser's part."

## LIST OF LITERARY WORKS BY SRIS CHANDRA BASU

1. *Lay of Liberty* (in English, Lahore, 1876)
2. *Physical Geography* (in Urdu, Lahore, 1881)
3. *Middle School Examination Papers* (Lahore, 1883)
4. *Indian National Songs and Lyrics* (in English, Lahore, 1883)
5. *An Easy Introduction to Yoga Philosophy* with the translation of the Siva Samhita (Calcutta, 1886)
6. *Folk Tales of Hindusthan* (Lahore, 1886)
7. *Astadhyayi of Panini* (Allahabad and Benares, 1891-99)
8. *Isa Upanishad*—translated into English with six Commentaries (Bombay, 1896)
9. *Gheranda Samhita* (Bombay, 1896)
10. *Catechism of Hinduism* (Benares, 1899)
11. *Isa and Kena Upanishads* with the commentaries of Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhva (Allahabad, 1901)
12. *The Sidhanta Kumudi of Bhattoji Dikshita*—translated into English (Allahabad, 1902)
13. *Katha Upanishad*—translated into English with the Commentaries of Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhva (Allahabad, 1905)
14. *The Three Truths of Theosophy* (Allahabad, 1905)
15. *The Wahabis—their right to pray in the same Mosque with the Sunnis* (Allahabad, 1906)
16. *The Compass of Truth* translated from Prince Dara Shikoh's *Risala-i-Haq-Numa* (Allahabad, 1913)
17. *Sacred Books of the Hindus*, Vol. I. *Six Minor Upanishads* translated with Madhva's Commentary.
18. *The Sacred Books of the Hindus*, Vol. II, part I, *Yaina-  
valkya Smṛti*, with the commentary, *Mitaksara* and notes from the gloss *Balambhatti*, translated into English.
19. *The Sacred Books of the Hindus*, Vol. III. *The Chhandogya Upanishad*, translated into English with Madhva's commentary and copious explanatory and critical notes.

20. *The Sacred Books of the Hindus*, Vol. V. *The Vedanta Sūtras of Bādarāyana* translated into English with Govinda Bhasya of Baladeva and copious explanatory and critical notes.
21. *The Sacred Books of the Hindus*, Vol. XIV.
22. *The Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad* with the Commentary of Madhva translated into English, Allahabad, 1915.
23. *The Daily Practice of the Hindus*.







